Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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OPINION METER

This week's poll:

Which tandem will you vote for in the runoff election?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

PANDEMIC ALERT STATUS

PHASE 6

As of November 9, 2009

Phase 6: The pandemic phase, is an indication that a global pandemic is underway.

For more information about the H1N1 flu, contact DPH at 236-8797, Monday to Friday, from 8am to 5pm, 234-8950 during after hours, e-mail cnmipheoc@gmail.com, or visit www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/.

Source: CNMI Department of Public Health, World Health Organization

INSIDE

Best Contractor

dck pacific guam LLC has been named the Guam Contractors' Association's Contractor of the Year awardee.

BUSINESS...Page 13

Dowdy Carey

You'd be forgiven for not recognizing Mariah Carey in her role as a dowdy welfare caseworker in "Precious."

LIFE & STYLE...Page 18

Applications for homelessness program suspended for now. **PAGE 3**

CUC exposed to risk of receivership, says consultant. **PAGE 5**

NMI voters reject 4 initiatives

CEC certifies election results; mayoral bet wants recount

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Election Commission certified yesterday the results of Saturday's general election for 40-plus seats in government and set the runoff election for Nov. 23.

During the same meeting at 3:30pm, the election board also certified that all four initiatives placed on the ballots failed to get the needed number of votes to pass.

These included the Open Government Act of 2007, a popular initiative endorsed by Rep. Tina Sablan that proposes to subject the Legislature to the Act. The measure received only 6,579 affirmative votes, still short by over 300 votes to get the majority of the 13,784 total votes cast during Saturday's general election.

House Legislative Initiative 16-11,

See VOTERS on Page 4

Judge's ruling on federalization out before Nov. 28

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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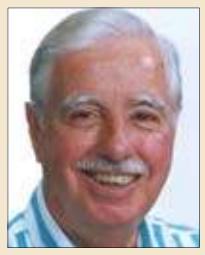
REPORTER

The judge that is handling the CNMI government's lawsuit against federalization has disclosed that he will issue a ruling on the case before Nov. 28, 2009, according to Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's special legal counsel, Howard Willens.


Willens

In an e-mail yesterday, Willens said that U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia Judge Paul L. Friedman had announced during a telephone status conference late Friday afternoon that he will issue his opinion on the federalization lawsuit before the start date of federalization.

The Department of Homeland Security is set to implement federal immigration laws in the CNMI on Nov. 28, under the authority provided by the Consolidated Natural Resources

See JUDGE'S on Page 4

WHOA! HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Lt. Gov. Eloy Inos, seated-center, and military active duty members and veterans raise their fists as they shout "Whoa!" shortly after Inos signed a proclamation declaring Nov. 5 to 15 Veterans Week to pay tribute to men and women currently serving or served in the military in defense of freedom, during a brief ceremony on Capital Hill yesterday. Veterans Day is on Nov. 11, and a ceremony will be held at the American Memorial Park where there will be a B-52 flyover by the U.S. Air Forces out of Guam's Andersen Air Force Base between 11am and 12 noon. ***See story on Page 2.***

'Bill on $1M Tinian loan request unconstitutional'

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

EXCLUSIVE

A Tinian local bill that paved the way for a $1 million loan request with the Marianas Public Lands Trust has been found unconstitutional, and that the Tinian Legislative Delegation went beyond its power to authorize debt or public debt.

Senate legal counsel Ian Catlett, in a legal opinion dated Nov. 5, said Tinian Local Bill 16-3 contains subject matter

See BILL on Page 4

Local

Military members urged to choose NMI as 'home port'

No troops from NMI were hurt in deadly Fort Hood shooting

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Military members who are on active duty and call the CNMI home are encouraged to choose the Commonwealth as their "home port" of record so that their federal income taxes will be remitted by the federal government to the CNMI instead of other states or territories, thereby helping the local economy.

At the same time, officials yesterday said there were no CNMI troops hurt in the shooting at the Fort Hood Army Post in Texas on Thursday last week.

Twelve Army members and one civilian died in the shooting, while 42 other people were wounded, according to Fort Hood's public information office.

Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos, right after yesterday's signing of a proclamation declaring Nov. 9 to 15 Veterans Week and Nov. 11 Veterans Day, said active duty members have an option of choosing their home port of record.

In the U.S. military, "active duty" refers to military members who are currently serving full time in their military capacity.

Inos said when those active duty members who call the islands home choose the CNMI as their home port, the CNMI will receive more in cover-over taxes.

Cover-over taxes are federal income taxes that should have been remitted to the CNMI government since 1976 but were transferred to the federal government.

"This is one of the ways for active duty members to help the CNMI economy. If there's a way to reach out to them… We encourage them to declare the CNMI as their home port of record for the cover-over taxes," said Inos, adding that active duty members can also avail of tax refunds and rebates when they file taxes.

The lieutenant governor said he learned that many CNMI residents who are active duty members and were recruited in Guam write "Guam" instead of the "CNMI" as their home port of record, and the Commonwealth therefore loses in cover-over taxes.

Ruth Coleman, executive officer of the CNMI Military and Veterans Affairs Office, said listing the CNMI as home port of record has another advantage: the military will ship their stuff, including their vehicles, to the CNMI free of charge.

Coleman said there are over 350 military active duty members from the CNMI. They are found in the five branches of the U.S. military, she added. These branches are the Army, Air Force, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard.

"Our numbers are growing," she said.

Coleman added that the Veterans Outreach Clinic will open in the first or second week of December.

She said a psychologist for the clinic has already been hired.

Veterans Day, Week

Inos signed yesterday a proclamation declaring Nov. 5 to 15 Veterans Week, and Nov. 11 Veterans Day.

Those who witnessed the signing included active duty members and members of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3457.

Coleman said the CNMI has more than 1,200 veterans, including reservists. After reservists are called to duty, they are considered veterans, she said.

A Veterans Day ceremony will be held at the American Memorial Park Court of Honor on Wednesday.

Coleman calls this ceremony "The 11th Hour, the 11th Day, the 11th Month," because it will be held at 11 a.m. on the 11th day of November, which is the 11th month.

"On Veterans Day, we pay tribute to the service and sacrifices of the men and women who, in defense of our freedom, have bravely worn the uniform of the United States," Inos said in the proclamation.

He said the country is forever indebted to veterans for their quiet courage and exemplary service.

"We also remember and honor those who laid down their lives in freedom's defense. These brave men and women made the ultimate sacrifice for our benefit," Inos added.

B-52 flyby

Col. Dan Settergen, commander of the 36th Contingency Response Group at Andersen Air Force Base in Guam, will be the guest speaker at the Veterans Day ceremony on Wednesday.

During the ceremony, the 36th Wing out of Andersen Air Force Base in Guam will also have a B-52 flyby.

The Boeing B-52 Stratofortress is a long-range, subsonic, jet-powered, strategic bomber operated by the U.S. Air Force since 1955.

All veterans, active and reserve military members, their families, family members of departed veterans, the local Marine Scouts and the public are invited to join Wednesday's activities at the American Memorial Park.

FOR EDUCATION MONTH CELEBRATION:

Tudela, Nervaez are GTC's outstanding awardees

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

From left, Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School Support Staff of the Year Ariel Narvaez, school principal Charlotte Camacho, and Teacher of the Year Jaime Tudela pose for a team photo. The school, located in San Roque, has not picked a Teacher Aide of the Year to compete in the CNMI-wide search for outstanding school personnel.

Gregorio T. Camacho Elementary School named two of its employees outstanding personnel of the year and the two will vie for the overall title in the Public School System's search for educational awardees this month.

Jaime B. Tudela, 32, was hailed as the school's Teacher of the Year after she met the criteria set by the school system for all nominees.

Tudela is a former teacher aide in San Vicente Elementary School before she moved to GTC as a regular classroom teacher.

Although it was her first time to be nominated for the school's teacher of the year recognition, Tudela has been the recipient of the teacher aide award during her tenure at San Vicente Elementary. She has been working in public schools for three years now.

As a kindergarten mentor, Tudela describes her profession as both challenging and fulfilling.

"It's an honor for me…but I think all teachers should be honored the same. We all do the same job and I believe it takes a lot of hard work to be chosen for this honor," she told *Saipan Tribune.*

To effectively instill learning in her students, Tudela acts the way she teaches. "I serve as their role model and I always make sure that learning is fun," she said.

Tudela attends to 29 kindergarteners daily during the school's morning and afternoon classes and supports the idea of having a full-day instruction for kindergarten students.

"For me, three hours is not enough. In a full-day instruction, a lot of learning can be done," she said, adding that this will also help better prepare kindergarteners for first grade.

GTC administrators and staff described Tudela as hardworking, organized, caring, knowledgeable, energetic and a passionate mentor, with a positive attitude toward teaching and learning.

Also recognized for his hard work was Ariel Narvaez, who was the PSS overall Support Staff of the Year awardee in 2008.

The 44-year-old maintenance worker has been consistently getting the nomination for the same award for three consecutive years. Narvaez has been serving the school for five years now.

Narvaez, according to school administrators and staff, has the uncanny ability to improvise, create, and adapt to any situation requiring his attention and skills.

He is a talented carpenter, electrician, plumber, and an excellent all-around handyman.

TOURISM
Tuesday
A weekly update from the Marianas Visitors Authority
Tourism is everybody's business.
The Night of Rota 2009
The friendly island of Rota drew 11,093 visitors last fiscal year with its unique small-island charm and other qualities being highlighted by the Marianas Visitors Authority (MVA) to potential visitors.
A recent trade show spotlighted the island in Korea. "The Night of Rota 2009" was held in August in downtown Seoul. The MVA hosted 45 travel agents and nine hotel partners at the event, which was cosponsored by Rota Resort & Country Club, Asiana Airlines, and DFS Saipan. In addition to a presentation by Rota Resort, the night featured live entertainment and Lucky Draw Prizes of luxury products. The top prize winner won a travel package of roundtrip airfare and three nights stay at the upscale Rota Resort & Country Club.
This Saturday, the MVA and its partners will host the annual Rota Blue Triathlon, another of the MVA's events aimed at building international awareness of the island. In addition to attracting close to 200 anticipated participants, this weekend's Rota Blue Triathlon will be covered by Triathlon Trip magazine of Japan and will help promote Rota tourism.
Rota welcomes golfers, honeymooners, divers, athletes and folks just there to relax. Rota is a tropical escape worth seeing for oneself.
HAFA ADAI & TIROW WAY
MARIANAS VISITORS AUTHORITY
This Tourism Tuesday space is provided by Saipan Tribune

Applications for homelessness program suspended for now

As hundreds troop to NMPASI to apply for rent assistance

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The Northern Marianas Protection & Advocacy Systems Inc. temporarily stopped yesterday accepting new applications for a housing aid program on Saipan after more than a thousand individuals tried to apply for assistance.

Over a thousand of mostly alien workers have been trooping to NMPASI's office in Gualo Rai since Friday to apply for the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program.

NMPASI executive director Jim Rayphand told *Saipan Tribune* that there may have been a misunderstanding of what the program is for.

"The criteria is you have to be extremely low income. You have to be homeless or you have to be on the very verge of being homeless or at risk of being homeless," Rayphand said.

He said another misunderstanding is that the program is for alien workers only.

"It's for homeless people. Nonresidents can qualify. But again it's not exclusively for nonresidents," Rayphand said.

NMPASI decided to stop yesterday accepting new applications on Saipan, but the agency may open for new applications in the next couple of weeks.

"We cut off the applications for the moment because we have to process those what I think may be non-eligible people applying. But we still have to entertain everybody. We need to make sure that they are eligible. We stopped only temporarily," Rayphand said.

The total funding for the program is $335,224. It is funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and is administered by the U.S. Housing and Urban Development.

The Northern Marianas Housing Corp. is collaborating with NMPASI, Council on Developmental Disabilities, and the Coalition for Anti-Stigmas of Mental Illness to help promote and implement the program.

Rayphand said yesterday they processed only those who signed up for the program last week. This week, NMPASI staff will be on Tinian and Rota to accept applications.

On Saipan, Rayphand said, about 80 people are already eligible, but nobody has received any assistance yet.

"For those eligibles, they still have to identify appropriate housing, things like that," he said.

NMPASI opened the program to the public on Oct. 26, but as word about it spread, an estimated 700 people showed up at NMPASI on Friday. Yesterday morning, about 300 people trooped to NMPASI again.

Rayphand said the amount to be provided to eligibles will depend on a case-by-case basis.

"The idea is to try to provide rental. It is not direct money. It's not cash payment. But it would be rental and utilities assistance that would obviously be paid directly to landlords as long as they are legitimate landlord operators," he said.

If the applicant can show an eviction notice from a landlord, then he or she may be eligible, Rayphand said.

"There are actually some homeless people here. We've got people that are working, they've got two jobs, but they just want more help. Maybe they have too many kids. But you know they may qualify. The priority is for people that are homeless or really honest to goodness about to be homeless," he said.

Rayphand said it is for people who just lost their jobs and they can't pay their rent anymore and their landlords are about to evict them.

He clarified that they haven't given out any money yet.

He said NMPASI's part is only to process applications.

Rayphand said some people think that NMPASI is giving a little extra cash and that the agency is giving out three months worth of free rent to nonresident workers.

"It has nothing to do with residency. It's about homelessness and homelessness prevention," he said.

Inos reaches out to Independents

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Lt. Gov. Eloy S. Inos yesterday said getting the support of Independent gubernatorial candidates Juan "Pan" T. Guerrero and Ramon "Kumoi" S. Guerrero, as well as their supporters, is a "work in progress."

"During elections like this, it takes efforts to reach out to them. It takes a couple of days to reflect on the result of the election. We think that the Independent candidates ran a very well managed campaign. We congratulate them for their efforts. Obviously, we want to reach out to them, asking them if they could endorse our team," Inos told *Saipan Tribune* in an interview after a proclamation signing on Capital Hill yesterday.

Inos

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and Inos of the Covenant Party will be facing off with Republican Rep. Heinz S. Hofschneider and running mate House Speaker Arnold I. Palacios in the first gubernatorial runoff election in CNMI history.

The runoff is set for Nov. 23, Commonwealth Election Commission executive director Robert Guerrero said last night, after the commission certified the results of the Nov. 7 general elections.

The runoff will be held because none of the top two vote getters in the four-way gubernatorial race received 50 percent plus one of the votes cast in Saturday's polls.

Hofschneider topped Fitial by only eight votes, 4,900-4,892, based on unofficial tally.

Both Guerrero and Deleon Guerrero could not be reached for comment yesterday.

On Sunday afternoon, however, Guerrero said he needs to meet first with his core team and supporters to decide on whether to support any of the two candidates in the first gubernatorial runoff election in CNMI history.

Inos said the CNMI cannot afford the "alternative" to the Fitial administration.

"We still believe this is the team that will move the CNMI forward. Now it's not about Fitial and Inos; it's about the CNMI. We can't afford to divide ourselves in these trying times. We ask the general public to consider supporting us all the way through the runoff election," he said.

Fitial had said it will be "very risky" for the CNMI to vote for a governor without proven leadership, especially in these challenging times amid federalization and economic recovery concerns.

Hofschneider, for his part, calls for change in leadership.

Besides maintaining their core supporters, both Fitial and Hofschneider's camps have to reach out to at least 3,744 others who voted for Guerrero and Deleon Guerrero on Saturday.

Guerrero received 2,643 votes, while Deleon Guerrero got 1,101.

More than 2,000 other registered voters who failed to vote on Saturday will also play a key role in sealing the victory of either Hofschneider or Fitial in the runoff election.

The teams have also started campaigning for the runoff.

SAVE THE DATE!
GUAM/CNMI MILITARY CONTRACTING OPPORTUNITIES SYMPOSIUM
Hosted by the Office of U.S. Defense Representative for Guam, CNMI, FSM, and Palau
Wednesday, November 18
8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Saipan World Resort
A pre-event mixer is scheduled for
November 17, 5:00 p.m.
Saipan World Resort
Learn first-hand from the experts. Topics will include U.S. Military contracting, business opportunities available through military construction projects, the military build-up, and so much more. The symposium is intended for all CNMI residents interested in business opportunities with the U.S. Military. Registration will be required. Seating will be limited.
Look for additional details to be available in follow-on advertisements in this newspaper.
Co-hosted by:
NAVFAC
Naval Facilities Engineering Command
NAVFAC MARIANAS
Supported by:
COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICIAL SEAL

Citizen's call leads to arrest of 3 suspected burglars

A concerned citizen's call about a group of persons hanging around an abandoned house in Chalan Kanoa early Friday morning led to the arrest of a man and two male juveniles who had just allegedly burglarized a vehicle.

Marco Kevin Tiamson Castro, 20, was arrested for conspiracy, burglary, theft, and criminal trespass. A bail hearing was set yesterday afternoon for Castro.

The juveniles were also set for a hearing yesterday before a juvenile court.

Detective Regino Celis Jr. stated in his report that on Friday at 3:30am, Jae Won Lee went to Chang Won Restaurant in Chalan Kanoa.

Thirty minutes later, Lee discovered that his jacket containing $400 cash, carton of cigarettes, and a box of cologne were missing from his van.

At 6:58am, a concerned citizen called the Department of Public Safety about a group of persons spotted in an abandoned semi-concrete house.

Responding police officers found Castro and two male juveniles. The officers recovered money from the three.

During interrogation, Castro admitted burglarizing cars, Celis said.

Castro confessed to being responsible for burglarizing a van that was parked near Moon Night Club and stealing a jacket that contained money. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

Guam's Camacho meets Secretary of Transportation

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Gov. Felix P. Camacho last week met with the secretary of the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), Ray LaHood, to discuss the use of funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 for the island's seaport and airport expansions and local roadway infrastructure improvements.

"Without the expansion of our transportation systems, we cannot expect to grow commerce in the Western Pacific," said Gov. Camacho. "Secretary LaHood was well-informed of our infrastructure needs, especially related to ensuring a successful Guam Military Buildup Program."

The one-hour meeting touched on the use of federal dollars to modernize the Port Authority of Guam (PAG). Gov. Camacho asked for favorable consideration for approximately $50 million in discretionary funding from Secretary LaHood to begin the multi-phase expansion at Guam's seaport and asked him to advocate for Guam with the secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack, for approval of a $50 million direct loan to the PAG.

The U.S. Maritime Administration, a DOT agency, has spent the past year assisting the PAG in using federal funds for planning and engineering projects at Apra Harbor to gain the designation as a strategic port by the Military Surface Deployment and Distribution Command. Gov. Camacho remarked that Secretary LaHood was well-versed on the issues surrounding the DOT funding for the PAG projects and the impacts the decision will have on other federal programs being leveraged to assist in this effort.

"Our seaport is our lifeline to the rest of the world, and Secretary LaHood recognized the impacts the DOT funding will have on serving Guam and Micronesia," said Gov. Camacho. "I stressed that his approval on DOT funding is critical to the Port's modernization and will ensure growth and expansion in an important industry."

Gov. Camacho said that Secretary LaHood praised the efforts of the Guam Department of Public Works (DPW) for its timely submission for applications related to DOT's portion of ARRA projects. DPW was the first in the United States to submit projects for consideration under the ARRA law. ARRA-related road construction, mass transit expansion, and airport upgrades are to begin in the first quarter of 2010.

"DPW has changed the perception of Guam by this accomplishment and has turned heads in the right direction with all the other executive branch agencies," said Gov. Camacho. "We will further define what DPW and other government of Guam agencies will bring to national decision makers and ensure as an administration that we protect the livelihoods of all our residents."

For more information please contact Charlene Calip at 475-9303, or e-mail charlene.calip@guam.gov.***(PR)***

BILL

From Page 1

beyond the scope of local law and the Tinian delegation was therefore "acting beyond its legal authority passing it."

"In addition, the bill creates a public debt that is not authorized in accordance with the Constitution and is intended to be used for an unconstitutional purpose," Catlett said in his eight-page opinion, a copy of which was obtained by *Saipan Tribune*.

Catlett, a former House of Representatives counsel, started working as Senate legal counsel on Sept. 16.

He said the loan arrangement contemplated in Tinian Local Bill 16-3 has the characteristics of a public debt.

Public debt, according to Catlett, "must be authorized in accordance with Article X, section 3 of the Constitution, and may not be used for the operating expenses of a municipality.

"Finally, this local bill did not comply with statutory procedures for adoption. For all of these reasons, I do not believe T.L.B. 16-3 is legally sufficient," he said.

Rep. Tina Sablan (Ind-Saipan) also earlier expressed concern that the MPLT loan may be unconstitutional, citing the same reasons mentioned by the Senate legal counsel.

Sablan, who has been championing transparency and accountability in government, also said the terms and conditions of the loan request "are extremely risky for both sides."

"It would be totally irresponsible and short sighted for the municipality to take such massive risks," she told *Saipan Tribune.*

Catlett said the Constitution and statutes do not permit a local legislative delegation to authorize borrowing.

The powers of the delegation arise from Article II, section 6 of the Commonwealth Constitution, and from 1 CMC 1402, its statutory complement.

Catlett also said the Tinian delegation's reliance on the Tinian Casino Gaming Control Act is misplaced.

'Fatal'

Not only does the local Tinian bill itself state that it will create a public debt, but the character of the contemplated transaction is that of a public debt, Catlett said.

"This is fatal because public debt may only be authorized by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members in each house of the Legislature," he said, citing Article X, section 3 of the Constitution.

Thus, public debt may not be authorized unless at least six senators and 14 representatives vote in favor of the bill.

In the case of Tinian Local Bill 16-3, the Tinian Legislative Delegation, consisting of three senators and one House member, falls far short of the requisite number of votes to authorize public debt.

Three of the four members of the Tinian Legislative Delegation passed the bill on Oct. 19.

Catlett also said the bill is procedurally defective. He said the bill should have lain for three legislative days before members of the House of Representatives.

Those who passed the local bill were delegation chair Sen. Joseph Mendiola (Cov-Tinian), delegation vice chair Sen. Henry H. San Nicolas (Cov-Tinian), and Rep. Edwin Aldan (Cov-Tinian), who authored it.

Only Sen. Jude U. Hofschneider (R-Tinian) did not vote on the local bill, due to the lack of public hearing on a public indebtedness, and concerns about exacerbating Tinian's budget deficit.

Two days after the Tinian Legislative Delegation passed the local bill, Gov. Benigno R. Fitial signed it into a local law on Oct. 21.

Another two days later, MPLT approved the Tinian municipality's loan request "in principle" during a board meeting on Tinian, even before a legal opinion on the matter was sought.

MPLT had also approved the terms and conditions of the $1 million loan request from Tinian.

However, the MPLT board of trustees said it also awaits a legal opinion on the loan request during its Oct. 30 meeting on Saipan.

Mendiola and other officials said the delegation and the Tinian Mayor's Office asked for a legal opinion on the loan request from Lucy Blanco-Maratita. That opinion has yet to be released.

House Speaker Arnold I. Palacios (R-Saipan), however, sought a separate legal opinion on Tinian Local Bill 16-3 from Catlett.

Catlett also said "public debt may not be used for the operating expenses of a municipality, which is the stated intent of the bill."

The Senate legal counsel cited Article X, section 4 of the Constitution.

Financing scheme

"By proposing to secure a loan, expend the proceeds on operating expenses, and commit future revenues to loan repayment, the financing scheme in T.L.B. 16-3 is unconstitutional," Catlett said.

Tinian plans to use the $1 million to pay municipal employees' retroactive salaries amounting to $520,913.84; another $201,729.96 to pay Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino for expenses related to the 60th anniversary commemoration for the Battle of Tinian in 2004; and $277,356.20 for future scholarships.

Tinian plans to use Tinian casino gaming revenues and fees to pay the loan.

MPLT, in its terms and conditions on the loan, said it shall have the authority not only to require the Tinian Municipality to go into receivership, but also to require it to suspend all public purpose programs and raise taxes, fees and revenue if it defaults on its $1 million loan payment.

The conditions also include an 11 percent annual interest on the loan for five years or 60 months and maintaining a reserve account of $2.5 million each year.

JUDGE'S

From Page 1

Act of 2008.

Willens said the counsel for the Commonwealth and the U.S. Department of Justice participated in the status conference, which took up the CNMI's motion to stop DHS from implementing its interim final rule.

The interim final rule was published on Oct. 27, 2009. It is scheduled to become effective on Nov. 28, 2009, providing for a CNMI Transitional Worker Program.

The CNMI contends that the DHS cannot justify its failure to follow the notice and comment provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act before issuing these regulations in final form.

Willens said that Friedman instructed DOJ to file its response by Nov. 13, 2009. The judge also gave the CNMI until Nov. 18 to file its reply brief. Friedman set the oral argument on the motion on Monday, Nov. 23, 2009.

Willens said that Friedman told both CNMI and Justice counsels that he was working on his opinion on the Commonwealth's earlier motion seeking a preliminary injunction of selected provisions of the Consolidated Natural Resources Act and the Justice's motion to dismiss the federalization lawsuit.

The CNMI, through counsel Jenner & Block law firm, filed on Nov. 2, 2009, a memorandum in support of the motion for a preliminary injunction that seeks to stop the implementation and enforcement of the DHS regulations that were promulgated on Oct. 27.

According to Jenner & Block, the Commonwealth has met all the requirements for the issuance of a preliminary injunction.

The law firm asked the court to issue a preliminary injunction barring DHS from enforcing or implementing the interim permit rule pending the court's resolution of the Commonwealth's claims on the merits.

The CNMI recently filed an amended complaint, asking the court to declare invalid the DHS interim final rule on the CNMI transitional worker program.

VOTERS

From Page 1

which prohibits the withdrawal of any funds from the general fund except for appropriations, was also rejected, getting only 5,476 votes.

The same fate befell Senate Legislative Initiative 16-11, which pertains to the holding of regular general elections in even-numbered years. The proposed measure got only 5,644 "yes" votes.

Voters also thumbed down the amendment proposed by House Legislative Initiative 15-3, which requires a high school student to be a member of the Board of Education. The initiative got only 5,353 affirmative votes.

According to CEC executive director Robert Guerrero, all four measures were not ratified because these didn't get the majority of the 13,784 total votes cast in the election.

Runoff polls

After certifying the election results, the board adopted Nov. 23 as the date for the runoff election between the top two vote-getters for the governor's post.

Incumbents Gov. Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Gov. Eloy Inos of the Covenant Party will face Republican Party standard bearers Heinz Hofschneider and Arnold Palacios in the runoff.

Guerrero emphasized that absentee voters will still counted in the runoff election, provided that their absentee ballots are postmarked by the date of the runoff and are received by the commission no later than 14 days after.

Guerrero said the commission, according to law, must send the absentee ballots no later than 10 days before the election.

"We will be sending the absentee ballots in the next three to four days," he assured.

Guerrero, however, said the commission has no projection as to how many of the absentee voters in Saturday's election will participate in the runoff.

"This is a first in CNMI history and we don't know yet what to expect," he said.

There were over 2,000 absentee ballots received and counted during Saturday's election.

Election Commission legal counsel Meaghan Hassel Shearer confirmed with *Saipan Tribune* yesterday the certification of the election results.

'Recount for Rebuenog'

Saipan Tribune learned that the election board also scheduled a recount of the votes on Friday at 11am for one Northern Islands mayoralty candidate.

Ramona Rebuenog, who ran under the Covenant Party, asked the commission yesterday for a recount after she was beaten by independent opponent Tobias Aldan by just one vote—68 versus 67 votes.

The commission is expected to issue a certification of the recount if changes are noted in the new tally.

DUE TO DEFICIENCIES IN INTERIM FINANCIAL PLAN

CUC exposed to risk of receivership, says consultant

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The continued failure of the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. to comply with the requirements of federal stipulated orders is exposing the agency and its ratepayers to the risk of receivership, according to a utility consultant.

In its Nov. 4 report to the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission, Georgetown Consulting Group said that CUC has yet to satisfy 10 requirements under the stipulated orders, including the submission of a complete interim financial plan within 180 days, the identification of funding sources, a report on the power plants' oil management system, oil spill prevention and response, among others.

Georgetown said the substantial inadequacies in the interim financial plan that CUC submitted to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency have a potential of making CUC undergo receivership.

"These deficiencies and inaction by CUC have potentially exposed CUC and its ratepayers to the risk of receivership and have the potential to create a vacuum between CUC and its customers," the consulting group said.

Among the serious deficiencies are the total lack of local governance and consumer input on CUC policy and operations.

Georgetown has recommended that the Public Utilities Commission "proactively" fill these voids by adopting a regulatory plan that will enable CUC to meet its water quality and financial obligations under the stipulated orders.

Furthermore, Georgetown believes that a collaborative model the commission has attempted in the recent past has not been effective. It recommended that all commission actions be fully documented, objectively oriented, and meet specific goals for CUC.

It was the commission that ordered the review and investigation on CUC's interim financial plan.

Last month, EPA told CUC that it has accrued $630,000 in penalties for not complying with the mandates of the stipulated orders, which CUC to comply with the mandates of the Clean Water Act and Safe Drinking Water Act.

In October, during EPA's review of CUC's interim financial plan, it also voiced serious concerns with CUC's lack of compliance with the orders.

'Serious concern'

The consulting group also denied CUC's early report to EPA that GCG is involved in crafting the interim plan.

"To the contrary, CUC made the decision not to have GCG involved in the development of the IFP document filed with EPA," the consultant's report said.

Since CUC chose not to collaborate with Georgetown, its role has been limited, it said.

"EPA has voiced urgent concerns about critical deficiencies of the IFP (such as waste oil management) and has imposed significant stipulated penalties that if CUC is required to pay can only be funded by water and wastewater rates approved by the CPUC," the consultants said.

In an interview with CUC executive director Tony Muña last week, he said the agency is preparing a response to EPA's letter about the unsatisfied requirements and accrued penalties.

'Added cost to CUC'

Besides the payment of accrued penalties, CUC will also incur the additional burden of paying receiver fees if it does not immediately address the requirements of the stipulated orders, Georgetown said.

"If this were to occur, as in the Guam with the landfill situation, there will be significant consequences, including the payment of receiver fees in addition to the payment of potential fines that have been estimated by EPA to have accrued to $634,000 through Oct, 16, 2009," Georgetown said, adding that control of the compliance process will be shifted from local governance to the federal courts and a receiver.

All of which could have a significant detrimental effect on CNMI general fund revenues and/or CUC ratepayers, Georgetown said.

Saipan Tribune learned that EPA is currently evaluating its next steps for enforcement of the orders.

Medicare's certification delaying opening of Hemodialysis Center

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Department of Public Health disclosed that the opening of the hospital's Hemodialysis Center is being delayed due to the lack of a Medicare certification.

Saipan Tribune learned that Medicare will not certify the building without it having a medical director, administrator, masters-prepared social worker and a renal dietitian. The facility will not also be opened unless issues related to its flawed design and its water treatment system are resolved.

In an earlier report to the Legislature, the department said the physical structure of the building meets federal requirements but a certain part of the unit is being worked on to meet standards, such as the water treatment system.

At present, the building has two dialysis machines that were installed about two months ago. The department is waiting for 29 more to complete the target of 31 new machines for operation.

Once these machines arrive, the hospital's biomedical department will validate the units before these are accepted for operation. The department said all these machines must comply with all federal requirements too.

Once the Hemodialysis Center opens, an estimated 27 patients can be treated all at the same time in one shift.

As of October, a total of 102 patients are being dialyzed at the Commonwealth Health Center by a private clinic, St. Jude Renal Care, *Saipan Tribune* learned. Of this number, 91 are from Saipan; four are from Tinian; and seven are from Rota.

The existing dialysis center at the hospital has 25 dialysis machines that are more than 9 years old.

Besides the lack of needed machines and officials to run the Hemodialysis Center, the department also admitted that there is no sufficient staff to operate the existing dialysis units.

At present, the dialysis unit has 11 registered nurses, four licensed practical nurses; one nurse assistant; and 12 patient care technicians.

The Hemodialysis Center project was initiated during the Babauta administration. However, due to funding issues, this was not completed on time. Serious problems with the project were also discovered, including a flawed design that bloated the original cost of the project.

Ex-convict charged with selling gun pleads guilty

An ex-convict who was charged in federal court with selling a gun entered a guilty plea yesterday.

In his plea agreement, Dexter Ulloa Maratita pleaded guilty to the charge of possession of a firearm by a prohibited person.

U.S. District Court for the NMI designated judge David A. Wiseman accepted the agreement and Maratita's guilty plea. Wiseman set the sentencing for Feb. 16, 2010. Maratita was allowed to remain free on bail.

The maximum penalties of the charge are imprisonment of not more than 10 years and a $250,000 fine.

Under the plea agreement, the range of the prison term is 10 to 16 months. The U.S. government will recommend the low end of the sentencing guideline range.

The plea agreement stated that on March 16, 2009, Maratita sold a Colt .25 semi-automatic pistol to a "cooperating source" working with the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives.

Maratita has a prior conviction for a theft case in 1997. **(Ferdie de la Torre)**

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Free 'Cash for College' workshop

The Northern Marianas College will be hosting a free "Cash for College" workshop to help students and their parents maximize scholarship opportunities that are available to students that want to obtain a college education.

The free workshop will be held on Saturday, Nov. 21, 2009, at the college's Building A (east side of campus). The workshop will be an ongoing session, so participants can stop by anytime between 9am and 3pm.

"We are extremely excited to be offering assistance and guidance again to individuals seeking to further their education," said NMC president Dr. Carmen Fernandez. "The first Cash for College workshop, which was held earlier this year, witnessed a huge turnout, attracting nearly 400 individuals."

"Many of these individuals are now receiving thousands of dollars in financial aid," added Fernandez.

Those who attend the workshop will receive personal, step-by-step assistance in completing college financial aid forms for the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, the Saipan Higher Education Financial Aid, and the CNMI Scholarship.

Staff members from the college's Office of Admissions and Records will also be present to provide information and assistance with the NMC application process.

Workshop participants will also be eligible to have their application fee and placement test fees waived for the Spring 2010 semester.

Participants are encouraged to bring documentation that are required by the scholarship agencies. These documents include a valid form of identification (e.g. passport, birth certificate), an official transcript from high school (at least three official copies), tax forms, and proof of CNMI residency for 2008 and 2009, including proof of continuing residency. Applicants for SHEFA must bring a voter registration card.

For more information, contact the Office of Admissions and Records at 234-5498 ext. 1524/37, or email oar@nmcnet.edu.

The Cash for College is made possible by the financial support of the U.S. Department of Education's College Access Challenge Project. ***(NMC)***

NMC Grazing Academy workshops start Wednesday on Rota

The first series of workshops from the Northern Marianas College's Marianas Grazing Academy will be held on November 11, 12, and 13 at the College's Rota Instructional Site. Workshops will run from 9am to 3:30pm on all three days. The Academy is aimed at building local agricultural capacity and educating farmers and ranchers about increasing the economic viability of their products.

The workshops, which require no registration or participation fee, will include training on pasture and livestock management issues, including forage production, grazing management planning, weed control, forage selection, animal health and treatment practices, meat quality and marketing, and mobile slaughter facilities.

The Academy, a project organized through a collaborative effort between the NMC Cooperative Research Extension and Education Service (CREES) and experienced pasture, livestock, and soil specialists from the University of Hawaii, University of the Virgin Islands, and the University of Guam, seeks to enhance the production of high quality meat products, which can serve to improve food sustainability through the adoption of appropriate technologies and practices in grazing and livestock management.

The Academy also seeks to provide local farmers, ranchers, technical resource personnel and other interagency collaborators with assistance and guidance in planning and developing special local projects to improve the economic viability of grazing activities in the CNMI.

Similar workshops will be held on November 17-19, 2009, at the NMC Tinian Instructional Site. To register for the workshops, please contact Alejandro Badilles (Tel. 532-9513) for the Rota session or Dr. Allen Sabaldica (Tel. 433-2576) for the Tinian session.

The Marianas Grazing Academy project has been made possible by a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, CSREES Outreach for Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers. ***(NMC)***

NPs celebrate passage of new nursing law

From Nov. 8 up to the 14th, the CNMI joins the recognition of "National Nurse Practitioner Week"—a first in CNMI history.

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial was joined by Health Secretary Joseph Kevin Villagomez for the proclamation signing on Nov. 5, 2009, at the conference room of the Office of the Governor.

Bertha Peters Camacho, MSN, NP, president of the CNMI Nursing Association, said this week's celebration is significant because it was this year when Public Law 16-34 was signed into law.

The bill that became the basis for the new law was introduced by Sen. Joseph Mendiola on behalf of the Commonwealth Board of Nurse Examiners. It sought to implement regulations consistent with national standard regulations.

The bill received overwhelming support from the Senate and members of the House of Representatives and was signed into law by Fitial on March 23, 2009.

With the law's passage, NPs and other advanced practice nurses can now be fully utilized by the health care system, which means increasing access to quality health care that is cost-effective, said Camacho.

"Working over 10 years for the Department of Health as a Nurse Practitioner, and working with the Board of Nursing in the regulatory arena, I say with full confidence and without reserve that signing P.L. 16-34 into law was absolutely the right thing to do," she said. "This bill is in line with health care reform and it promotes increasing access to quality health care focusing on promoting wellness and prevention services. This bill is also in line with the recently introduced H.R. 3962 'Affordable Health Care for America Act' by U.S. Congress, a comprehensive health care reform bill promoting NPs as primary care providers."

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, seated center, and Health Secretary Joseph Kevin Villagomez, seated right, are joined by CNMI Nursing Association officers and members, Board of Nursing officials, and representatives of the CNMI Breast and Cervical Program, Commonwealth Health Center, Southern Clinic, and the STD/HIV program during the proclamation signing of "National Nurse Practitioner Week" on Nov. 5, 2009, at the conference room of the Governor's Office.

Camacho acknowledged the help of Dr. Grant, Dr. Hocog, Dr. Lamar, Dr. Beiling, and Dr. Brostrom for their supportive letters to the Legislature, and to Dr. Balachandra, Dr. Ramsey, and Dr. Don Hardt, for helping ensure the passage of P.L. 16-34.

Besides Camacho, others present at the proclamation signing were Board of Nursing vice chair Roca Q. Sablan, secretary Elaine Camacho, consumer representative Rafaela Perry, and representatives from the CNMI Breast and Cervical Program, Commonwealth Health Center, Southern Clinic, and the STD/HIV program. *(Saipan Tribune)*

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

OES PTSA meeting today

The PTSA officers of Oleai Elementary School would like to inform parents and guardians that there will be a PTSA meeting today, Nov. 10, 2009, 6:15pm, in the school cafeteria. Everyone is encouraged to attend. ***(PR)***

Chacha Ocean View PTSA meeting

Chacha Ocean View Jr. High School will have its first PTSA meeting on Thursday, Nov. 12, 2009, at 6pm - 7pm in the school cafeteria. Agenda will include the Lancheru Fair (one of the upcoming COJHS events) and other events. The school is urging everyone's attendance at this meeting. For more information, call 237-3721 or 664-4100. ***(PR)***

Saipan Little League meeting set

The President of Saipan Little League Baseball Inc., Tony Rogolifoi, is calling a meeting for all managers, coaches, and team statisticians on Wednesday, Nov. 11 (Veteran's Day), at 9am at the Tan Ko Palacios Baseball Field. Agenda includes entry fee, opening date, new league requirements, etc. Immediately after the meeting, Rogolifoi will conduct a coaching and umpires' clinic and a statistician/scorekeeping refresher course for all present. Everyone is urged to plan ahead as these courses may take at least four hours. Bring rule books, notebooks, pens and lunch/drinks.

Managers and coaches who are eyeing the district/regional tournaments are highly advised to attend these courses. The SLLB Board has decided on making these clinics a prerequisite to being considered to the management team of the above tournaments. ***(PR)***

Saipan to observe 'Feed Saipan Thursday'

Saipan Mayor Juan B. Tudela will sign a mayoral proclamation on Nov. 19, 2009, at 11am to designate Thursday, Nov. 26, 2009, Thanksgiving Day as "Feed Saipan Thursday."

Traditionally for six years, "Feed Saipan Thursday" reminds everyone to fast for one full meal on Thanksgiving Day to remember those who continue to starve because they have less or no food on their eating table. Saipan will also remember those who remain homeless and in dire need of clothing and shelter.

The Office of the Mayor of Saipan is now receiving food, clothing and monetary donations to be turned over to Karidat Social Services. Anyone who would like to generously donate food, clothing and money, may the call the Saipan Mayor's Office at 234-6280 or 6208 and ask for Ton Benavente. You can bring your donations to the Saipan Mayor's Office during business hours, Monday to Friday. ***(PR)***

Survivors, families and friends encouraged to walk

Team Courage is inviting all cancer survivors, their families and friends to join them on Saturday, Nov. 14, 2009, at the Garapan Fishing Base for the first-ever Thanks For Giving Walk. The Thanks For Giving Walk is coordinated by CNMI cancer survivors and will start at 7am.

Participating in this event is an opportunity for families and friends to get a head start in fielding a team for the MMAC event next year. A Thanks For Giving Walk T-shirt will be given to the first 100 walkers/joggers with a $5 minimum donation.

Interested in joining, but don't have a team yet? No worries! Contact Janine Nogis at 483-4207 or send an email to MMAC2010@googlegroups.com. ***(PR)***

Operation NMC SROTC on Thursday

Returning CNMI cadets from the University of Guam's Senior Reserve Officers Training Corps will be hosting "Operation NMC SROTC" at the Northern Marianas College Student Center on Thursday, Nov. 12, 2009, from 1pm-2pm. These returning student leaders will be hosting an information session regarding the CNMI's Army Officer producing program available at NMC for all interested individuals considering the military as a career. The purpose of this event is to explain the significance of the Corps, its integral role in CNMI and its contribution to the success of CNMI cadets. ***(PR)***

Thank you for your support

Hafa Adai CNMI and thank you for your support on November 7th. We congratulate the other two candidates for a well run campaign.

Now that the top two candidates have been chosen, it is time for you to participate in the first Gubernatorial Runoff Election scheduled for Monday, November 23rd.

For four years now I have been honored to serve you. We have experienced many joys together such as births, weddings, graduations, and new jobs, but also many pains such as the passing of fine and upstanding members of our families. Throughout all this you have allowed me to become part of your families and I cannot thank you enough.

Together we have made great strides towards improving the quality of life for all of the citizens of the CNMI. But our job is not done as we have much to do towards continuing our efforts to bring new jobs to our community as well as improving our healthcare and education system, making the Retirement Fund complete, and privatizing the CUC.

With Proven Experience we have shown Proven leadership and wish to continue serving you over the next four years. Please vote the "right" choice on November 23rd.

Vote Ben and Eloy!

Thank you!

Covenant PARTY
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

www.beneloy.com

PAID FOR BY THE COMMITTEE TO ELECT FITIAL-INOS

MAI THAI SPICES

An old favorite re-emerges in San Antonio

Although it opened almost a couple of months ago in San Antonio, Mai Thai Spices already has attracted a loyal following.

And you can't blame the customers for frequenting the restaurant, as Mai Thai Spices not only boasts of great food, good ambiance, and reasonable prices, but also has provenance working for it.

Mai Thai Spices owner Tony C.P. Ng used to run the old Mai Thai restaurant in Garapan more than a decade ago. He announced his return to the restaurant business with the opening of Mai Thai Spices last Sept. 25.

The previous Mai Thai Restaurant was an island favorite for many years before it closed in the late 1990s but anyone fortunate enough to dine there can attest to its uniqueness in offering only the finest in Thai cuisine.

Banking on a sure thing, Ng opened Mai Thai Spices and said everything that Mai Thai Restaurant was—from the furniture and decorations to the menu—is Mai Thai Spices now.

Restaurant staff Buakhlee Phoorhamonasri said the name Mai Thai means "Spicy Thai Silk" in her native Thai. She said they prepare Thai food based on recipes handed down from generation to generation using the freshest and finest ingredients imported directly from Thailand.

FOR RESERVATIONS

■ Mai Thai Spices at 234-3173

In fact, she said Mai Thai Spices takes deliveries of fresh herbs, spices, and authentic Thai ingredients directly from Bangkok once a month, which makes Mai Thai Spices the most authentic Thai restaurant on island.

Ng said Thai food is known for its hot, sour, sweet, and salty elements, which make having a fresh supply of herbs and spices—including garlic, coriander, lemon grass, mint, and an assortment of hot peppers—not only a must but a necessity in their cooking to perk up their dishes' flavor and aroma.

The restaurant also serves different varieties of freshly ground coffee brewed in their own espresso machine. Mai Thai Spices can also host garden parties at night and on weekends. It will soon have Wi-Fi connection so that customers would not miss important e-mails while dining. The restaurant will also be accepting credit cards soon.

Mai Thai Spices is located at the Royal Crown Insurance building, right across Sunleader Mart in San Antonio. It can comfortably seat 60 people and is open from 10am to 10pm Monday to Sunday.

For more information and reservations, call 234-3173 or the main office at 234-2256/57. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Mai Thai Spices builds on the tradition of the old Mai Thai Restaurant, which used to tickle the taste buds of tourists and locals alike in Garapan.

Historic healthcare legislation hurdles House

WASHINGTON, D.C.—The U.S. House of Representatives on Friday passed legislation providing sweeping healthcare coverage for Americans by a vote of 220 to 215.

U.S. Rep. Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP) was among the many members of the Democratic caucus who rose to speak in favor of H.R. 3962, the Affordable Health Care for America Act, during the day-long debate.

ON THE NET

■ http://sablan.house.gov

"The need for healthcare reform has never been greater nor more urgent," said the Northern Mariana Islands representative.

Sablan

"This is true for my district, as it is for our nation. "We cannot wait another day. We must seize the moment and pass a law that will go a long way to providing quality, accessible, and affordable healthcare for all Americans."

Video of Sablan's statement is available on YouTube and at http://sablan.house.gov.

Among the many benefits to the Northern Mariana Islands contained in the bill are $209 million in Medicaid funding over the next ten years, four times more than the Commonwealth now receives.

In addition, the Governor of the Commonwealth will have the option of creating a health insurance exchange, opening the public insurance option to the people of the Northern Mariana Islands and providing $300 million for the insular areas to help to cover the cost of insurance premiums for individuals.

Consumers who purchase health insurance will also gain new protections, including no lifetime limit on coverage, and limits on denial because of certain pre-existing conditions, such as birth defects and domestic violence.

Seniors Medicare benefits are also improved in the bill. The cost of prescription drugs will go down as a result of new negotiated rates with drug companies. Prevention and wellness care for seniors will be free under Medicare.

The bill next goes to the Senate for action. Both the House and Senate must agree on a bill before it goes to President Obama for his signature. ***(PR)***

Commerce sets distribution schedule for foreign investor, foreign student permits

The Department of Commerce announced yesterday the schedule for pickup of two-year umbrella permits for foreign investor certificate holders, long-term business permit holders, foreign retirees and foreign students. These individuals are reminded to bring their permits and/or passports to show proof of identification.

The purpose of these umbrella permits is to protect the status of holders from Nov. 27, 2009, through Nov. 27, 2011.

The pickup schedule is as follows:

■ **Foreign investment certificate holders**: Immigration category 240G (Formerly 706G)

■ **Long term business certificate holders**: Immigration category 240N (Formerly 706N.6(A))

■ **Foreign retiree:** Immigration category 240O (Formerly 706O)

Above permit holders with last names starting with A through L: Nov 10

Above permit holders with last names starting with M through Z: Nov 12

■ **Foreign student**: Immigration category 240H (Formerly 706H)

Above permit holders with last names starting with A through L: Nov 16

Above permit holders with last names starting with M through Z: Nov 17

Others

■ For those investors whose permit applications are pending: Nov. 23, 24

■ For those students whose permit applications are pending: Nov. 24, 25

■ For all Commerce permit holders who miss the original date: Nov. 24, 25

All Commerce permit holders should make sure to pick up their umbrella permits *before* November 27, 2009.

With respect to umbrella permits for the immediate relatives of all Commerce permit holders, the Department of Labor will issue such permits. For those who currently hold valid immediate relative permits: Nov. 10, 12, 13 at the 1st floor distribution center at the Labor building in San Antonio.

For those who do not currently hold valid immediate relative permits, but whose applications are pending or who qualify under the Governor's expanded program to keep families together:

Fill out a request form on Nov. 10, 12 at the Administrative Hearing Office; pick up permits on Tuesday afternoon, Nov. 17, at the Administrative Hearing Office.

Commerce is reminding all permit holders that the underlying permit approved by the department must remain in good standing; otherwise the umbrella permit will be revoked.

For more information, call Commerce Foreign Investment Office at 670-664-3018. ***(PR)***

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Nov. 10, 1999

Lin's son escapes kidnap attempt

The 13-year-old son of one of Saipan's biggest garment manufacturers escaped a kidnapping attempt while in school Monday afternoon. Police suspected this could be a kidnap for ransom attempt. According to a police report, the boy, who is the son of businessman James Lin, owner of UIC, was about to attend his band class around 1pm when an Asian-looking woman called him to approach a brown van parked near the Saipan Community School. The woman, according to the report, called the boy's name in Chinese and told Lin's son that she has something for his mother.

BOE to tally 409 more votes

For some candidates, the election is not yet over until it's over. The Board of Elections has yet to tally 409 ballots from absentee voters, and candidates with narrow margins may not be far from exchanging fates. BOE Executive Director Gregorio Sablan said the board will tally the remaining votes on Friday, and then finalize the official returns by next week. The tabulation will be held at 1pm at the Multi-Purpose Building in Susupe. "The board will meet after the tabulation on Friday to certify the results. We'll get the official figures out and announce the official winners," Sablan said.

Nov. 10, 2000

Students owe NMC $2.8M

Board of Regents Finance Committee head Vince Seman has instructed the Northern Marianas College Business Office to step up efforts in collecting unpaid student fees which have grown to $2.8 million over the last four years. Mr. Seman told the Business Office staff recover the remaining accounts receivables more seriously, even directing them to initiate legal action if necessary. "While we understand the need to assist our students, we also have bills to pay," said Seman during a BOR meeting yesterday. Under NMC policies, students still with balances to settle are not granted credits for the course they took unless they pay their dues.

CUC reports losses

Tough times are ahead for the Commonwealth Utilities Corp. as it continues to be saddled by rising fuel costs and unpaid government billings that have resulted to the agency operating at a loss this year. CUC Executive Director Timothy P. Villagomez yesterday warned utility officials of more belt-tightening in the next few months unless the price of fuel goes down and the government pays its debt. The board of directors was given a grim report on the government-owned corporation's financial shape at a meeting yesterday, indicating a loss of close to $300,000 for fiscal year ending Sept. 30, 2000.

Nov. 10 2002

NMC sees lower tuition in 2009

By 2009, local students at the Northern Marianas College would only be paying $25 per credit, a significant drop from the current fee of $65; that is if the expansion plan as advocated by NMC president Kenneth Wright prospers. Based on the NMC transformation plan that covers 2004-2009, the college's population-after six years-would grow to about 7,000 students, with its annual revenue anticipated to reach $117 million. Right now, the NMC has average enrollees of over 2,000 for one academic year. It has an annual income of about $17 million. The 2009 goal would be realized by implementing a program that basically promotes the entry of more international students from Asia. Wright, in an interview Friday, said the NMC has "terrific" marketing advantages-a quality program, close proximity, a tropical island, and a lower cost of education.

Technology in schools opens possibilities

Whenever Garapan Elementary School Vice Principal Boni Gomez needs to make an emergency announcement to teachers inside their classrooms, she can easily do so with just a click of a button without leaving the administrators' office. Through the school's SnapMail communication system—powered by technology infrastructure made by possible by E-rate funding—teachers are all at once alerted of the electronic memo, at a quick speed superior to the audio public-address system. "Also, if there's an emergency in the classroom and a child gets hurt, the teacher does not have to leave the classroom and not leave the students alone. They can just snap me or snap anybody in the office and we can get the nurse or call paramedics or we can call parents," said Gomez, marveling at the convenience that computer technology has brought to the Garapan public school.

Island Snapshots

A VOTE FOR THE GOP

The Republican Party's bet for the lieutenant governor position, House Speaker Arnold Palacios, casts his vote at the Garapan Elementary School at 5pm on Saturday. He and his teammate, Heinz Hofschneider, will be facing off with the incumbent administration, Gov. Benigno R. Sablan and Lt. Gov. Eloy Inos, during a runoff election that will be held in a few weeks.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

POLL WORKERS

Election workers at the Garapan Elementary School pose for the *Saipan Tribune* during a lull in Saturday's general election.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

NAVY VISIT

Visiting sailors Fred Cook, right, and Jack Sish, left, of the USS *Los Angeles*, speak in front of students of the Upward Bound Program at the Northern Marianas College's Student Center. The sailors were invited to speak to students of the TRiO programs, which include UBP, Student Support Services, and the Educational Talent Search, about careers in the U.S. Navy after obtaining an associate's degree from NMC.

NMC

BIRTHDAY SHOUTOUTS

"Happy Birthday going to our much loved brother, Harley "Back-Flip" Ngewakl! May the Lord continue to bless you always. Greetings coming from all your friends and family and most especially, Elsie and Mitz!

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

'HAPPY HOUR'

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial of the Covenant Party and first lady Josie Fitial shares a light moment with assistant attorney general David Lochabay at the Garapan Elementary School, just after casting their votes at 7:10am on Saturday. Fitial, who is seeking re-election, said he is very optimistic about his chances in the upcoming runoff election.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Happy birthday "Galavantress's" Nerissa Sablan and Vanessa Kosack, who are both celebrating their birthday today, Nov. 10. Greetings come from your family, friends and the "Mafia Bunch."

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy birthday greetings to Ioanis Edwin Pangelinan Rasa, who is celebrating his 18th birthday. Hope you have a great one, Ion! We love you! From Alana, Yuri, Anto, and Rudy.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Happy 4th birthday Allen. We love you so much! Greetings come from Mommy, Daddy, Ate Kastel, Ate Chen2, and Tito Benjie.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM
P.O. BOX 501370
SAIPAN, MP 96950

PUBLIC NOTICE

Head Start Policy Council
AGENDA

Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, the Head Start Policy Council hereby gives notice that it will have a meeting on November 13, 2009 (Friday) from 3:00pm – 5:00pm at Fleming's, San Jose, Tinian.

I. Preliminary Matters
1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Quorum
4. Adoption of Agenda
5. Adoption of October 20, 2009 minutes

II. Public Comments
III. Monthly Reports
1. Director
2. Managers
3. Finance
4. Council Standing Committees
   a. Personnel
   b. Education
   c. Executive
   d. Finance
   e. Public Relations

IV. Old Business
1. Assignment of Additional Members to Committees

V. New Business
1. Approval of 2009-10 Self Assessment Work Plan
2. Approval of Eligibility and Selection Form
3. Approval to Hire
4. Election of Community Representatives

VI. Executive Session
VII. Next Meeting
VIII. Adjournment

Note: Pursuant to Public Law 8-41, Section 13(a)7, the Council may vote to meet in Executive Session. Public Comments are limited to 15 minutes; therefore comments are limited to 3 minutes each.

This meeting is open to the public, interested individuals are welcome to attend. Any person(s) requiring special accommodations may contact Ms. Candace Quitugua at 664-3751.

/s/ Mr. Gene Weaver
Chairperson

Commonwealth Of The Northern Mariana Islands
PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM

PUBLIC NOTICE

In accordance with the "Open Government Act", the Public School System State Board of Education, through their Special Education State Advisory Panel (SESAP), is hereby serving notice to the general public that it will hold a meeting on Friday, November 13, 2009, 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Pacific Islands Club, Annex room. This meeting is open to the public. Interested individuals are welcome to attend.

AGENDA

I. Call to Order

II. Ratification and Amendments of SESAP By-law

III. Election of Committee Members
A. Executive Committee
B. State Plan Policy
C. Annual Report

IV. Training for Parents

V. Survey Results

VI. Other Matters

In compliance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), individuals who wish to attend this meeting, but require accessibility such as large print, sign language or interpreter, must call 237-3029/19. Several days' notice is necessary to allow organizer ample time to make necessary arrangements.

/s/ FRANCES DIAZ
Chairwoman

/s/ SUZANNE W. LIZAMA
Special Education Acting Coordinator

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
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MEMBER
The Associated Press Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Flawed health reform

Much of the criticism of the health-care measure that recently passed the House of Representatives is overwrought. Another part is simply wrong. Unfortunately, that does not mean that this is a good bill. As we have said, it does not do enough to control costs, and it is not funded in a sustainable way. Expanding coverage for the uninsured is imperative, but so, too, is getting the country on a credible fiscal path.

As an example of the hyperbole, take the ludicrous assertion by Minority Leader John Boehner, R-Ohio, that the Democratic measure "is the greatest threat to freedom that I've seen in the 19 years I've been in Washington." Come on. The proposal has been endorsed by the American Medical Association and the AARP, hardly wild-eyed radicals.

As an example of the simply wrong, take the assertions that the measure would result in insurance subsidies for illegal immigrants and federal financing of abortions. The House bill explicitly states that illegal immigrants are not eligible for federal insurance subsidies or to enroll in the public option. Although the language is being negotiated, the bill would, unlike the Senate Finance Committee version, permit illegal immigrants to purchase insurance on their own through the newly created exchanges. This should be welcomed, not discouraged. Fewer uninsured people means less uncompensated care costs dumped on hospitals, and it would bring younger, healthier people into the exchanges. In other words, the illegal immigrants would be helping the federal treasury, not draining it.

The controversy over abortion funding is similarly phony. Federal law prohibits the use of federal money for abortions except in cases of rape, incest or where the life of the mother is endangered. The House bill would leave that restriction in place. It would exclude abortion from the list of benefits that plans participating in the insurance exchange would be required to offer. Instead, the exchanges would have to include one plan that covers abortion, along with one that doesn't. Even so, the plans that cover abortion would have to take steps to make sure that federal funds are segregated from those used to pay for abortions.

Now to our concerns. The measure would cover 36 million more Americans, according to the Congressional Budget Office. That would be a major achievement. And yet: At what cost? The CBO says that the measure would be fully paid for—in fact, it would bring in money—both during the first 10 years and in the following decade. But will the planned cuts to Medicare spending be implemented—or will they be abandoned once they start to pinch? That is a risk, and the measure does not include enough other ways to get health-care costs under control. The bill would help spur needed changes in Medicare reimbursements to reward quality rather than quantity of care. But it is missing two important elements that the Senate Finance Committee bill begins to address: a commission to remove at least some of the politics from the business of determining Medicare payment policies and a tax on high-cost insurance plans. The House bill instead taxes the rich, tapping revenue that will be needed to narrow the overall federal deficit.

The House has already passed the bill. But there's a lot of work to be done before its final enactment will be possible—or desirable.

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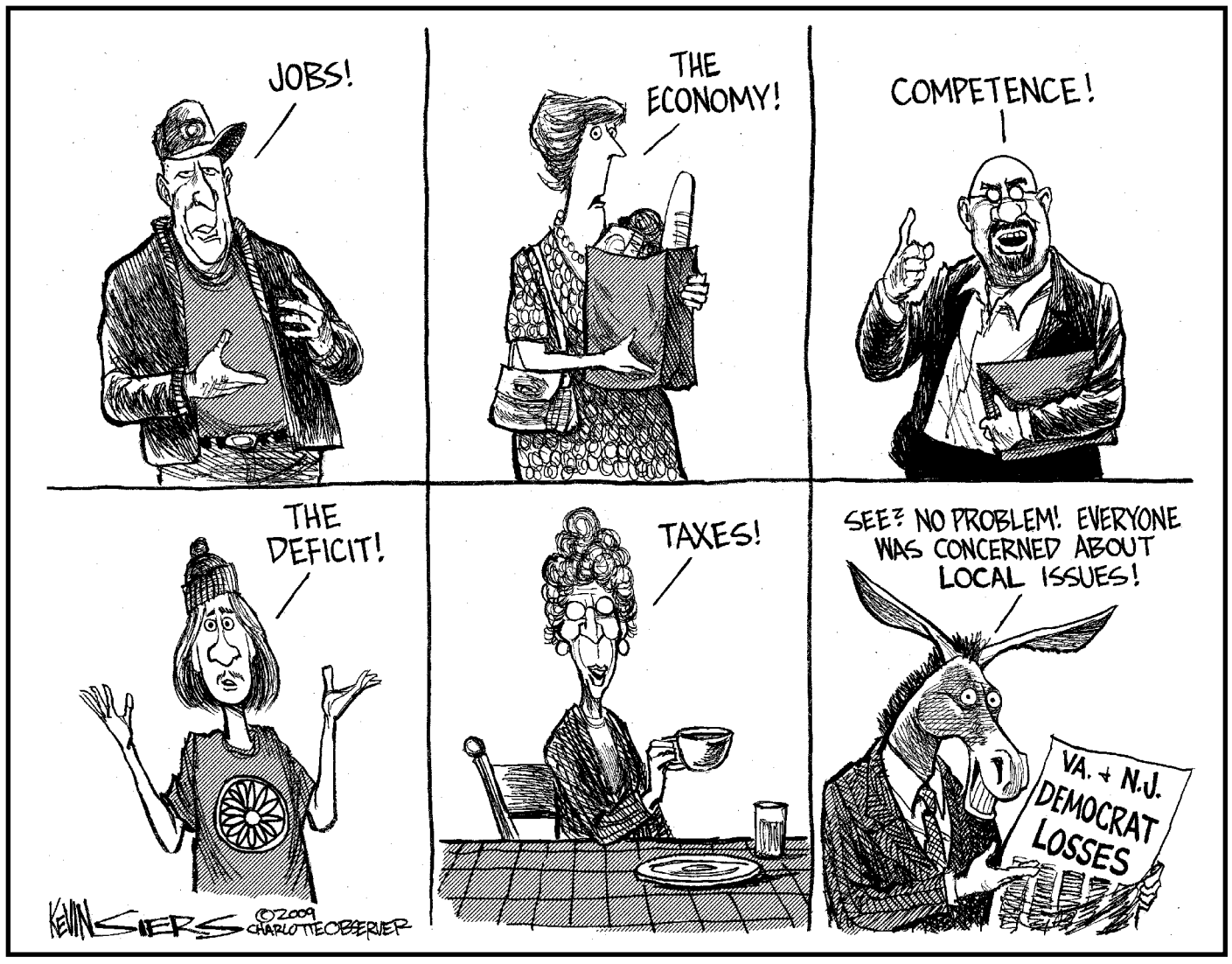


Five myths about our land of opportunity

By ISABEL SAWHILL AND RON HASKINS
SPECIAL TO THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON—Americans have always believed that their country is unique in providing the opportunity to get ahead. Just combine hard work with a bit of talent and you'll climb the ladder—or so we've told ourselves for generations. But rising unemployment and financial turmoil are puncturing that self-image. The reality of this "land of opportunity" is considerably more complex than the myths would suggest:

1. Americans enjoy more economic opportunity than people in other countries.

Actually, some other advanced economies offer more opportunity than ours does. For example, recent research shows that in the Nordic countries and in the United Kingdom, children born into a lower-income family have a greater chance than those in the United States of forming a substantially higher-income family by the time they're adults.

If you are born into a middle-class family in the United States, you have a roughly even chance of moving up or down the ladder by the time you are an adult. But the story for low-income Americans is quite different; going from rags to riches in a generation is rare. Instead, if you are born poor, you are likely to stay that way. Only 35 percent of children in a family in the bottom fifth of the income scale will achieve middle-class status or better by the time they are adults; in contrast, 76 percent of children from the top fifth will be middle-class or higher as adults.

The United States is exceptional, however, in the opportunity it offers to immigrants, who tend to do comparatively well here. Their wages are much higher than what they might have earned in their home countries. And even if their pay is initially low by American standards, their children advance quite rapidly.

2. In the United States, each generation does better than the past one.

As a result of economic growth, each generation can usually count on having a higher income, in inflation-adjusted dollars, than the previous one. For example, men born in the 1960s were earning more in the 1990s than their fathers' generation did at a similar age, and their families' incomes were higher as well. But that kind of steady progress appears to have stalled. Today, men in their 30s earn 12 percent less than the previous generation did at the same age.

The main reason today's families have modestly higher overall incomes than prior generations is simple: More members of the household are working. Women have joined the labor force in a big way, and their earnings have increased as well. But with so many families now having two earners, continued progress along this path will be difficult unless wages for both men and women rise more quickly.

3. Immigrant workers and the offshoring of jobs drive poverty and inequality in the United States.

Although immigration and trade are often blamed, a more important reason for our lack of progress against poverty and our growing inequality is a dramatic change in American family life. Almost 30 percent of children now live in single-parent families, up from 12 percent in 1968. Since poverty rates in single-parent households are roughly five times as high as in two-parent households, this shift has helped keep the poverty rate up; it climbed to 13.2 percent last year. If we had the same fraction of single-parent families today as we had in 1970, the child poverty rate would probably be about 30 percent lower than it is today.

Among women under age 30, more than half of all births now occur outside marriage, driving up poverty and leading to more intellectual, emotional and social problems among children.

In addition, we have seen a growing tendency among well-educated men and women to marry each other, exacerbating income disparities. If we add to these family changes the fact that wages for low-skilled workers have stagnated or declined in recent decades, we can explain most of the increase in poverty and much of the increase in the income gap as well.

4. If we want to increase opportunities for children, we should give their families more income.

Of course money is a factor in upward mobility, but it isn't the only one; it may not even be the most important. Our research shows that if you want to avoid poverty and join the middle class in the United States, you need to complete high school (at a minimum), work full time and marry before you have children. If you do all three, your chances of being poor fall from 12 percent to 2 percent, and your chances of joining the middle class or above rise from 56 to 74 percent. (We define middle class as having an income of at least $50,000 a year for a family of three.)

Many American families need supplements to their incomes in the form of food stamps, affordable housing and welfare payments. But such aid should not be given unconditionally. First, the public is concerned that unconditional assistance will end up supporting those who are not trying to help themselves. Second, new research in economics and psychology has shown that individuals frequently behave in ways that undermine their long-term welfare and can benefit from a government nudge in the right direction.

And third, policies with strings attached have had considerable success. One example is the 1996 welfare reform law, which required most adult recipients to get jobs, and dramatically increased employment and lowered overall child poverty. In the midst of a

See FIVE on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Quality healthcare for the people of the CNMI

By GREGORIO KILILI C. SABLAN
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan is the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands' delegate to the U.S. Congress.

The U.S. House of Representatives has now voted to support President Obama's goal of quality, affordable health care for all Americans. Along with the rest of the Democratic Party Caucus, the American Association of Retired Persons, the American Medical Association, the Asian & Pacific Islander American Health Forum and millions more Americans, I support national healthcare reform. And I was honored to represent the people of the Northern Mariana Islands this weekend during the long and wide-ranging debate on this history-making legislation.

Though the goal is affordable and accessible health care for every American, it has been a struggle to ensure that the people of the Northern Mariana Islands receive these benefits along with the rest of America.

At the beginning of the year, the draft legislation had nothing for the U.S. territories. Through constant effort, however, we turned that around. The bill we passed now has hundreds of millions of dollars and other benefits for the Northern Mariana Islands.

Here are the key improvements to health care for people of our islands:

■ **Four times more Medicaid funding.** The NMI will receive $209 million in Medicaid funding over the next 10 years—that's four times what we now get. As a result of this increased funding, more people will qualify for Medicaid and services will expand.

■ **Immediate protection for the uninsured.** We will see several changes right away that will protect those in the Marianas who are sickest and least able to buy insurance. A high-risk pool will be put in place to provide insurance for those who have been uninsured for several months or who have been denied a policy because of a pre-existing condition.

■ **Exchange opt-in.** Our governor will have the choice to create a health insurance exchange for the Northern Marianas like the ones in the States. This will give us access to the public option and $300 million for the smaller insular areas to help our people buy insurance. If the governor does not create an exchange, our extra money goes to expand Medicaid.

■ **Consumer protections.** People in the Northern Marianas will also receive new protections when purchasing insurance. There will be no lifetime limit on coverage. Insurance companies will not be permitted to drop coverage because people get sick. A new review process will make sure that premium increases are reasonable. Children up to the age of 27 will be able to be covered by their parents' insurance. And no one will be denied coverage because of certain pre-existing conditions, including birth defects and being a victim of domestic violence.

■ **Medicare benefits for seniors.** H.R. 3962 reduces the cost of prescription drugs for seniors by negotiating new rates with pharmaceutical companies and new discounts on certain drugs. Preventive and wellness care will be free under Medicare, so seniors can go to the doctor for treatment before a small issue becomes a serious medical condition.

The fight for access to quality, affordable healthcare for the people of the Northern Mariana Islands is not over. The Senate must act. Then the House and Senate must agree on a final bill to send to President Obama for his signature. It's still a long and winding road ahead. But I will work hard, along with my colleagues in the Democratic Party, to preserve the gains already in the Affordable Health Care for Americans Act that improve medical care in the Northern Mariana Islands.

And I intend to build on those gains and keep working to better health care for the people of the Northern Mariana Islands, as long as I serve in Congress.

Letters to the Editor

Hope and fears for the Commonwealth

I just happened to be reading our President's book, *The Audacity of Hope,* and after waking up to find out that we are faced with the two scenarios of hope and fears in our final choice for governor. I was compelled to write this letter because for the first time since my arrival in the CNMI, I woke up filled with hope that the people had chosen whom I think was the best for the CNMI, only to realize that only eight votes separated the top two candidates. Needless to say, fear set in when I considered what the final vote may yield. It really boils down to the same challenge that faced the people when the Commonwealth was created: *How and who can best help the people of the Commonwealth achieve the same quality of life of Americans on the mainland.* It's obvious this is the most important question that the people must answer before voting on the life of the Commonwealth for the next four years. This may be one of the most serious letters I have ever written and I can only pray it will do some good. As we pray for our politicians every Sunday it is now time to pray for us to be guided to make the right choice—there is just too much at stake!

Since it is now common knowledge that the demarcation line between the two gubernatorial teams is federalization, I can speak openly and freely on this issue. I won't try to tell anyone how to vote but I do believe everyone needs to be as informed as possible before voting and this my opinion based on the facts, the principles and history.

Our first mistake was picking a fight we couldn't win based on the very principal of "federalism." Diplomacy was the Commonwealth's best weapon in its creation and diplomacy is still the best weapon for dealing with our fathers in Washington, not lawsuits that clearly antagonize the federal government and our working relationship. The Commonwealth ultimately depends upon the feds to literally save our souls from the economic catastrophe we now face and the best our present administration has to offer is a lawsuit! Even if the lawsuit turns out to be in favor of the CNMI, we will still be right back were we started before the implementation of federalization—dead broke and with no real plan in place for economic recovery that does not include the federal government! Our current leaders didn't access our right to the United Nations who guaranteed all the people of Micronesia the right to self-determination and sovereignty. They didn't ask our fellow Micronesians who have seats in the United Nations to help us plead our case to the UN for more input in the implementation of federalization. In fact, we didn't make any real political noise to influence federal laws—we just picked up the biggest sticks we could find (lobbyists and now a lawsuit) to fight the federal government and it's clear that we lost with both approaches.

History also tells me that 88.8 percent of the people wanted to become a part of America and follow in the federal tradition and expectations, but it seems the 22.2 percent who were against the Covenant are still fighting this change in attitude and relationship with the United States. History also tells me that our present governor was one of the most outspoken on record against the Covenant and Commonwealth becoming a part of America, so for those who really know their CNMI history the present situation should not be a surprise. We must figuratively decide again on our relationship with the U.S. in the runoff as it is clear that with the Fitial & Eloy administration who are against federalization, we will be faced with an uphill fight with our federal government with no end in sight. With the Heinz & Arnold administration, who believe in the potential and principles that federalization offers, they have a genuine political party connection to the U.S. Congress, which will surely create a state of collaboration and diplomacy with the head of our government in Washington. Are you a part of the 88.8 percent or the 22 percent? The choice is really that simple especially when you think about how much we depend upon federal dollars and federal protection and help for all kinds of things. Friend or foe of the feds, you decide.

Who and when will we end this decade-old fight with the federal government? In the courts under a leadership that will not be favored by the U.S. or in the halls of diplomacy that will earn us the respect and the rights we deserve as part of the American family? There is no way to avoid the experience of growing pains in the CNMI; that's just the nature of life and our system. But if my forbears were able to emerge from slavery and the very bowls (ghetto) of America so I could sit on a CNMI State Board in America, then certainly the CNMI can emerge as a better place under federalization. I will be the first to say the CNMI has not always been treated fairly by America but I also know that fighting is not the solution to the symbiotic relationship with America that was voted on by the people in the plebiscite election to become a part of America. I'm sure it is the hope of many that we will have a new beginning in January as it is also their fear that we might be faced with the same old politics that have taken us nowhere fast for the past decade.

Ambrose M. Bennett
Kagman, Saipan

Stay the course

The results of the gubernatorial election show a divide among voters. This, of course, is very understandable. The present administration, just like the U.S. Administration, inherited a government that was in chaos and was basically broke. The world economic crisis, with the increase in oil prices, added to the problem that no sound management can overcome. President Obama encountered similar problems.

Right now the President's popularity is slipping but the economy is starting to show stability. So is our economy. That is, of course, if we maintain the present administration. Why? First, there is $100 million heading our way from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The intention of this funding is to provide assistance to states or territories to stabilize the economy and create jobs. Replacing the present administration can disrupt this forward movement, which may not be to our advantage.

Second, the present administration is still pursuing alternative energy projects that will eventually lower the cost of electricity for the long haul. These types of projects do not happen instantly. The magnitude of such projects requires several years to complete but, once completed, will be an asset to be realized for generations to come, not just 10 or 20 years but perhaps for hundreds of years—without the need for fossil fuels.

Third, we have the military buildup that is just around the corner, which will also contribute to our economic development.

Lastly, the protections of our Commonwealth through the language of our Covenant with the United States should be constantly monitored. Fighting for our right as state or local government is a must for any leader. In the 50 state of the United States, there are state rights that federal policies cannot trample. Our leaders should fight any interference with our local or state rights by federal policy. Federalization appears to pose a threat to our economic welfare as well as the welfare of those fellow men and women who help build our communities, our houses, and our government infrastructures. There is also a potential threat of deportation to maids who, after 10 or 20 years with a family, is considered a member of the family.

There is also the most important threat to our very own humanity—our "heart." Many of us are Catholics, many of the guest workers we consider our brothers and sisters, federalization may break up families and that of course will break our heart to see families being torn apart. This administration, I believe, is doing what it can to do good but the resources are understandably limited. The anger and the misunderstanding is quite normal. We have a responsibility to try and understand where we are and why. Changing the present course may do more harm than good.

Frank M. Aalig
Sinapalo, Rota

FIVE

From Page 10

recession, we can't expect everyone to work. But social policies will be more successful if they encourage people to do things that bring longer-term success.

5. We can fund new programs to boost opportunity by cutting waste and abuse in the federal budget.

Can we cut enough ineffective programs or impose enough new taxes to put better teachers in classrooms, expand child-care assistance for working families and provide more financial aid to disadvantaged students while reducing projected deficits? The answer is a resounding no. Certainly, we should eliminate fraud, waste and abuse; raise new revenues; and scrub the budget for additional savings. But these alone won't get the job done. Just three rapidly growing programs—Medicare, Social Security and Medicaid—along with interest on the debt threaten to crowd out all other spending in a few decades.

So we also need to revise the contract between the generations in a way that gradually reallocates resources from the more affluent elderly to struggling younger families and their children. Such a shift would not only help create more opportunity, it would improve the productivity of the next generation, making its members better able to contribute to the costs of retirement—including their own.

Isabel Sawhill and Ron Haskins are co-directors of the Center on Children and Families at the Brookings Institution and the co-authors of Creating an Opportunity Society. *isawhill@brookings.edu and rhaskins@brookings.edu*

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Sunny. Northeast winds 10 mph.	Partly cloudy with a slight chance of showers. East winds 10 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲88° ▼78°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲86° ▼77°

Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Showers	▲84	▼75
Palau	Sunny	▲88	▼77
Yap	Sunny	▲87	▼77
Chuuk	Sunny	▲88	▼78
Pohnpei	Showers	▲88	▼73
Kosrae	Sunny	▲89	▼76
Majuro	Mostly Sunny	▲86	▼77

Around The Globe

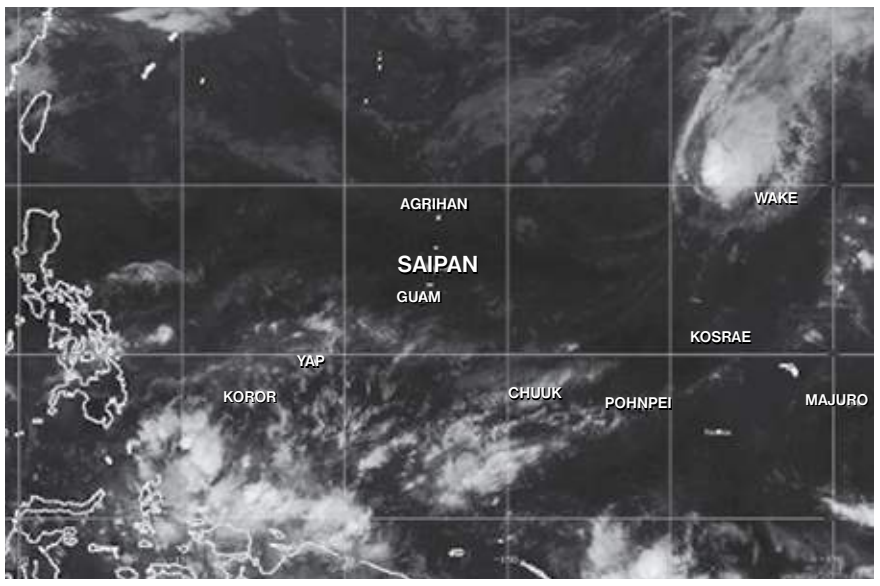
Auckland	Rain	▲63	▼53
Beijing	Mostly Cloudy	▲67	▼45
Hong Kong	Sunny	▲83	▼75
Honolulu	Partly Sunny	▲83	▼73
London	Cloudy	▲54	▼39
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	▲70	▼54
Manila	Partly Sunny	▲86	▼75
Melbourne	Sunny	▲86	▼60
Miami	Mostly Cloudy	▲81	▼72
New York	Mostly Sunny	▲53	▼44
Osaka	Mostly Cloudy	▲71	▼52
Paris	Cloudy	▲49	▼38
Pusan	Mostly Cloudy	▲72	▼55
Rome	Thunder Storms	▲61	▼53
Salem	Cloudy	▲53	▼40
San Francisco	Mostly Sunny	▲63	▼49
Seoul	Mostly Cloudy	▲69	▼53
Tokyo	Partly Sunny	▲68	▼54
Washington, DC	Partly Sunny	▲58	▼45

Tides

Saipan Harbor

7:28 AM Today	Low Tide:	0.1 Feet
2:54 PM Today	High Tide:	1.9 Feet
9:00 PM Today	Low Tide:	1.0 Feet

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, MONDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 2009
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Tropical Storm 25W with maximum sustained winds of 50 mph is centered 460 miles west-northwest of Wake Island. Scattered showers and thunderstorms near Wake Island are within 125 miles of a line from 19N163E to 23N165E. For more information on 25W, see JTWC Bulletins issued under WMO header WTPN31 PGTW and NWS advisories under WMO header WTPQ31 PGUM. A weak circulation is near 3N135E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms south of Palau are south of a line from 6N130E to 5N137E to EQ141E. A surface trough stretches northeastward from EQ152E to 8N160E. Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms southwest of Chuuk and Pohnpei are in an area from 4N140E to 6N157E to 1N147E back to 4N140E. Trade-wind convergence is triggering scattered showers and a few thunderstorms southeast of Majuro east of a line from EQ171E to 6N178E.

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:16 AM	5:45 PM
Wednesday	6:17 AM	5:45 PM
Thursday	6:17 AM	5:45 PM
Friday	6:18 AM	5:45 PM
Saturday	6:18 AM	5:44 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today		12:52 AM
Wednesday	12:56 AM	1:34 PM
Thursday	1:51 AM	2:15 PM
Friday	2:46 AM	2:55 PM
Saturday	3:40 AM	3:37 PM

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF NOVEMBER 4, 2009

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

C09597	11:30am	12:05pm	1, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM

C09597	12:40pm	1:10pm	1, 7

SAIPAN-GUAM

C09317	4:45am	5:35am	Daily
C09313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
C09597	11:30am	1:10pm	1, 7 via ROP
C09601	12:20pm	1:10pm	4, 5
C09603	3:15pm	4:05pm	Daily
C09605	6:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
C09599	9:20pm	10:10pm	Daily

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

NW287	6:00am	8:40am	Daily
NW297	4:45pm	7:30pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:20am	6:50am	1, 5

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ604	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ606	3:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

FM844	2:50am	5:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

CZ3008	3:30am	6:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA

OZ604/701	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ604/701	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ604/703	2:50am	11:25am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
C09603/933	3:15pm	9:40pm	Daily via GUM
C09599/PR111	9:20pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG

OZ604/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN
OZ604/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN

ARRIVALS

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

C09598	3:30am	4:05am	5, 6
C09312	1:20pm	1:55pm	6

GUAM-ROTA (ROP)

C09598	2:20am	2:50am	5, 6
C09312	12:10pm	12:40pm	6

GUAM-SAIPAN

C09598	2:20am	4:05am	5, 6 via ROP
C09316	2:20am	3:10am	1, 2, 3, 4, 7
C09596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
C09600	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
C09312	12:10pm	1:55pm	6 via ROP
C09602	1:50pm	2:40pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C09604	4:50pm	5:40pm	Daily
C09606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

NW298	10:05pm	2:50pm	Daily
NW288	8:45pm	1:20am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	2:20am+1	4, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ605	9:00am	2:20pm	4, 7
OZ603	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

FM843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1, 5

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

CZ3007	7:30pm	2:40am+1	1, 5

MANILA-SAIPAN

OZ702/603	1:10pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/603	1:10pm	1:30am+1 via ICN	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
PR110/C09596	10:10pm	7:50am+1 via GUM	1, 3, 5, 6, 7
C0934/9596	11:10pm	7:50am+1	Daily via GUM
OZ704/605	11:55pm	2:20pm+1	2,4,6,7 via ICN

HONG KONG-SAIPAN

OZ724/605	12:30am	2:20pm	2,4,6,7 via ICN
OZ750/605	1:00am	2:20pm	2,4,6,7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:30pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:30pm	1:30am+1 via ICN	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

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- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
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  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

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  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

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- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

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Business

Investors look to consumer for clues to recovery

CHARLOTTE, N.C. (AP)—Investors will get some guidance about the economy this week from data issued not by the government, but by big retailers in the form of third-quarter earnings reports.

The financial markets are still trying to get a sense of whether consumers, while worried about unemployment, are nonetheless willing to spend, especially as the holiday season approaches. Retailers' earnings reports and outlooks for the future should give them clues about the economic recovery. Investors will also get a first look at on consumer sentiment during November.

"For this economy to really come back, we have to depend on the consumer," said Yu-Dee Chang, principal of ACE Investment Strategists LLC.

The greatest obstacle to increased consumer spending is unemployment. And it's not only unemployed consumers who aren't spending, it's also those who are afraid of losing their jobs.

Investors did find some positives in the Labor Department's largely bleak October employment report on Friday. While the government said unemployment has risen above 10 percent for the first time since 1983, the market managed a modest advance as investors theorized that the weak labor market would mean the Federal Reserve will keep interest rates low for some time. The major stock indexes ended the week a gain of 3 percent.

Still, while traders ultimately didn't panic about the jobs data, they do know that the report could bode poorly for consumer spending, the largest component of the nation's economic activity.

Retailers' monthly sales reports released Thursday showed shoppers were still were not splurging as unemployment climbed and credit remained tight. And the Fed said consumers borrowed less for a record eighth straight month in September.

"Consumers aren't going to spend as much if they are worried about their jobs," said Ray Harrison, principal of Harrison Financial Group in Citrus Heights, Calif.

A hesitant consumer is particularly troubling heading into the holiday shopping season, and economists say that longer-term, stronger consumer spending will be necessary to sustain a recovery.

Analysts say, however, that some retailers may be the beneficiaries of consumers' continuing caution, which has made many of them migrate to the lowest-priced stores.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Representatives of dck pacific guam LLC, winner of the 2009 and inaugural *Guam Business* Guam Contractors' Association Contractor of the Year award, took center stage at the award presentation ceremony Nov. 7 at the Sheraton Laguna Guam Resort. From left, Kevin J. Smith, vice president, corporate safety operations; Lou Lucena, administration manager; Carlos Buhain, regional safety manager; Matthew J. Brodie, project director; Clyde Trego, vice pesident, business development, West Coast USA; Karen Storts, training administrator; Roy Igtanloc, contract manager; Carmelo Ledesma, chief estimator; Louis C. DeMaria, vice president, Micronesia, all from dck pacific guam LLC; Sen. Judith Won Pat, speaker, 30th Guam Legislature; Maureen N. Maratita, publisher, Glimpses Publications Inc.; Thomas D. Perez, vice president, business development, Perez Bros. Inc. and chairman, board of trustees, GCA; and James A. Martinez, president, GCA.

TAMUNING, Guam—*Guam Business* and the Guam Contractors' Association recently named dck pacific guam LLC as the 2009 and inaugural winner of the *Guam Business* Guam Contractors' Association Contractor of the Year award.

The award was presented at the GCA's 50th anniversary gala and 2009 Excellence in Construction Awards event at the Sheraton Laguna Guam Resort on Nov. 7, attended by more than 300 people.

dck pacific guam was one of five nominees on the slate for the Contractor of the Year honor. The other four nominee companies were Black Construction Corp., Core Tech International, Helix Electrical and Reliable Builders Inc. Nominees were judged based on their standing and prominence in the contracting field; their contribution through best practices to the elevation of the contracting profession within its community and to the wider Guam community; their safety record; their quality of work life, including professional development through training and other opportunities; and their social responsibilities and service to the Guam community. The judging panel consisted of civic leaders from major civic organizations in Guam and Saipan.

Said John D. Perez, vice president, finance, Perez Bros. Inc., who nominated dck, "The contractor/supplier relationship between dck and Perez Bros Inc is an ideal one. It is always a pleasure doing business with them. Their personnel exhibit professional behavior at all levels of the organization. Secondly, dck offers its sub-contractors mentor programs in safety, environment and OSHA. dck is in its third year with no loss time incidents — a significant safety related accomplishment considering the occupational hazards of the construction trade. dck utilizes local contractors in their projects that allows small to medium size contracting firms to grow in capacity and professionalism. dck's use of sub-contractors is an indirect economic contribution from these small independent businesses as a result of their experiences with dck. Their workforce grows, thus placing money into the local economy."

dck pacific guam has been established in Guam since 1985 under former companies, PACCO, Fletcher Pacific and Dick Pacific. In 2008, Dick Corp. and its subsidiaries underwent a corporate restructuring and name change when dck worldwide LLC was incorporated. The new entity acquired certain assets of Dick Corp. including Dick Pacific which was transformed to dck pacific guam as part of the new brand synergy with its parent company. dck pacific guam has 312 employees.

For more information about the *Guam Business* Guam Contractors' Association Contractor of the Year award, contact James A. Martinez, president of GCA at 647-4840/1 or Maureen N. Maratita, publisher, Glimpses Publications Inc. at 649-0883 ext. 124. ***(PR)***

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Northrop sells advisory services unit for $1.65B

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Northrop Grumman said Sunday it agreed to sell its advisory services business TASC Inc. to private equity firm General Atlantic LLC and affiliates of Kohlberg Kravis Roberts & Co. for $1.65 billion in cash. The No. 2 defense contractor says it will use the proceeds to fund a new $1.1 billion increase to its stock buyback program. At the end of the third quarter, the company had about $280 million remaining on its $2.5 billion share repurchase plan. TASC, based in Chantilly, Va., serves intelligence, defense and civil agencies. It has about 5,000 employees and is expected to record 2009 revenue of $1.6 billion. It is part of Northrop's information systems sector.

Oil rises above $78 on US hurricane, weaker dollar

SINGAPORE (AP)—Oil prices broke above $78 a barrel Monday in Asia as Hurricane Ida threatened oil installations in the Gulf of Mexico. Benchmark crude for December delivery was up 94 cents to $78.37 a barrel at midday Singapore time in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Ida, the first Atlantic hurricane to approach the United States this year, headed toward the Gulf Coast on Monday with 105 mph (169 kph) winds, and could make landfall as early as Tuesday.

Survey: Gas prices up 2.86 cents nationwide

CAMARILLO, Calif. (AP)—average price of regular gasoline in the United States has jumped 2.86 cents over a two-week period to $2.68. That's according to the national Lundberg Survey of fuel prices released Sunday. Analyst Trilby Lundberg says the average price for a gallon of mid-grade was $2.81. Premium was at $2.93. Tucson, Ariz., had the lowest average price among cities surveyed at $2.36 a gallon for regular. Anchorage was the highest at $3.30. In California, prices were down slightly. A gallon of regular cost an average of $2.96. Fresno had the state's least expensive gas at $2.83 a gallon. San Francisco remained the steepest at $3.04.

NM auto dealer tried to save business by gambling

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP)—A former Albuquerque auto dealer, faced with an ailing economy and difficulty getting credit for his dealership, says he turned to gambling last year in a bid to salvage the business. Ken Zangara racked up a $250,000 gambling loss just months before he closed his dealership in February. He says he was trying to win enough money to save the business. Zangara and his wife filed for a Chapter 7 bankruptcy Oct. 20. Zangara Dodge closed its doors Feb. 17, citing the economic crisis and loss of its primary lending source.

Software cos. eye key patent case in Supreme Court

WASHINGTON (AP)—With the technology industry looking on, the Supreme Court on Monday will explore what types of inventions should be eligible for a patent in a pivotal case that could undermine such legal protections for software.

A ruling that sides with the Patent Office could bar patents on processes and methods of doing business, such as online shopping techniques, medical diagnostic tests and procedures for executing trades on Wall Street. And it might even undercut patents on software.

In a worst-case scenario for the high-tech industry, the ruling could invalidate many existing software patents or at least make them more difficult to defend in lawsuits. And it could make such patents harder to obtain in the future because software is generally patented as a process for doing something rather than as a physical invention.

"Technology companies care about this case because it will define what you can and cannot get a patent on," said Emery Simon, counselor to the Business Software Alliance, which represents large technology companies including Microsoft Corp. and Intel Corp. "The scope of patentability could have ramifications for the path that technology takes."

Asian markets track US higher after jobs report

TOKYO (AP)—Asian stock markets rose Monday as investors took a surprisingly weak U.S. jobs report as a sign that interest rates in the world's largest economy will stay low longer than expected.

The region's gains followed Wall Street, where stock indexes climbed modestly Friday after the government said the U.S. unemployment rate surpassed 10 percent last month for the first time since 1983.

While clear evidence of America's economic woes, the climb in joblessness still gave investors reassurances the Federal Reserve will need to keep its bank lending rate at a record low range of zero to 0.25 percent for the time being. Low interest rates tend to slow demand for the dollar and support liquidity, which can in turn boost stocks.

"The economic sector is still weak, and we can expect no interest rate hike in the near term," said Linus Yip, strategist at First Shanghai Securities Ltd. in Hong Kong. "So all this is helping the U.S. market and the Hong Kong markets to remain firm."

Now that Asian investors have digested the U.S. labor market data, their focus will likely shift back to mainland China, Yip said.

Nation

Alleged Ft. Hood gunman may have 9/11 mosque link

FORT HOOD, Texas (AP)—A key U.S. senator said Sunday he would begin an investigation into whether the Army missed signs that the man accused of opening fire at Fort Hood had embraced an increasingly extremist view of Islamic ideology.

Sen. Joe Lieberman's call for the investigation came as word surfaced that Maj. Nidal Malik Hasan apparently attended the same Virginia mosque as two Sept. 11 hijackers in 2001, at a time when a radical imam preached there. Whether Hasan, an Army psychiatrist, associated with the hijackers is something the FBI will probably look into, according to a law enforcement official who spoke on condition of anonymity because the investigation is ongoing.

Classmates participating in a 2007-2008 master's program at a military college complained repeatedly to superiors about what they considered Hasan's anti-American views. Dr. Val Finnell said Hasan gave a presentation at the Uniformed Services University that justified suicide bombing and told classmates that Islamic law trumped the U.S. Constitution.

Another classmate said he complained to five officers and two civilian faculty members at the university. He wrote in a command climate survey sent to Pentagon officials that fear in the military of being seen as politically incorrect prevented an "intellectually honest discussion of Islamic ideology" in the ranks. The classmate also requested anonymity because the investigation is ongoing.

Lieberman, chairman of the Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, wants Congress to determine whether the shootings constitute a terrorist attack.

"If Hasan was showing signs, saying to people that he had become an Islamist extremist, the U.S. Army has to have zero tolerance," Lieberman, an independent from Connecticut, said on "Fox News Sunday." "He should have been gone."

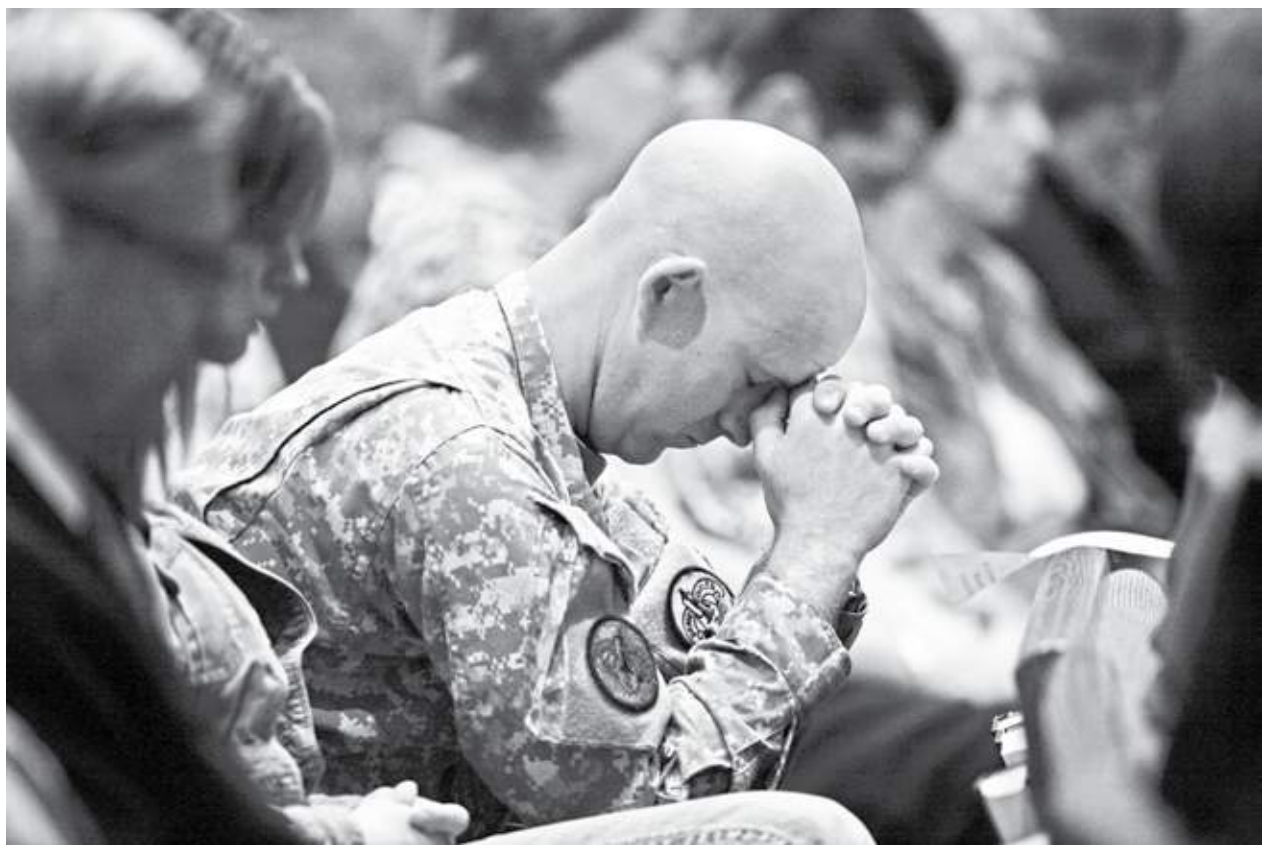
Authorities continue to refer to Hasan, 39, as the only suspect in the shootings that killed 13 and wounded 29, but they won't say when charges would be filed and have said they have not determined a motive. Hasan, who was shot by civilian police to end the rampage, was in critical but stable condition at an Army hospital in San Antonio.

He was breathing on his own after being taken off a ventilator on Saturday, but officials won't say whether Hasan can communicate. Sixteen victims remained hospitalized with gunshot wounds, and seven were in intensive care.

Hasan's family described a man incapable of the attack, calling him a devoted doctor and devout Muslim who showed no signs that he might lash out.

"I've known my brother Nidal to be a peaceful, loving and compassionate person who has shown great interest in the medical field and in helping others," his brother, Eyad Hasan, of Sterling, Va., said in a statement Saturday. "He has never committed an act of violence and was always known to be a good, law-abiding citizen."

Army Chief of Staff George Casey warned against reaching conclusions about the suspected shooter's motives until investigators have fully explored the attack. "I think the speculation (on Hasan's Islamic roots) could potentially heighten backlash against some of our Muslim soldiers," he said on ABC's "This Week."



AP

U.S. Army Sgt. Andrew Sobecky bows his head during the singing of "Amazing Grace," during a prayer service at First Baptist Church, Sunday, Nov. 8, 2009, in Killeen, Texas.

Lawmaker wants probe of E. coli and school lunches

WASHINGTON (AP)—The chairman of the House Education and Labor Committee wants an investigation into the risk of deadly E. coli getting into school lunches.

Rep. George Miller, D-Calif., is worried about a recent outbreak that killed at least two people and sickened about two dozen others in 11 states.

The E. coli outbreak was linked to ground beef produced by Fairbank Farms of Ashville, N.Y.

No schools were involved in the outbreak. But Miller said he's worried that tainted food might be purchased for school meal programs.

Miller asked the Government Accountability Office, the investigative arm of Congress, to see whether there are adequate protections for school meals at the local, state and federal level. He also asked investigators to compare the safety and quality of ground beef available to schools with the ground beef available to restaurants and other commercial buyers.

The GAO said in a September report that federal authorities had failed to tell schools about recalls of potentially tainted peanut products and canned vegetables, and cafeterias may have unknowingly served them to children.

House health care overhaul faces Senate stone wall

WASHINGTON (AP)—The glow from a health care triumph faded quickly for President Barack Obama on Sunday as Democrats realized the bill they fought so hard to pass in the House has nowhere to go in the Senate.

Speaking from the Rose Garden about 14 hours after the late Saturday vote, Obama urged senators to be like runners on a relay team and "take the baton and bring this effort to the finish line on behalf of the American people."

The problem is that the Senate won't run with it. The government health insurance plan included in the House bill is unacceptable to a few Democratic moderates who hold the balance of power in the Senate.

If a government plan is part of the deal, "as a matter of conscience, I will not allow this bill to come to a final vote," said Sen. Joe Lieberman, the Connecticut independent whose vote Democrats need to overcome GOP filibusters.

"The House bill is dead on arrival in the Senate," Sen. Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., said dismissively.

Democrats did not line up to challenge him. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., has yet to schedule floor debate and hinted last week that senators may not be able to finish health care this year.

Obama

Nonetheless, the House vote provided an important lesson in how to succeed with less-than-perfect party unity, and one that Senate Democrats may be able to adapt. House Democrats overcame their own divisions and broke an impasse that threatened the bill after liberals grudgingly accepted tougher restrictions on abortion funding, as abortion opponents demanded.

In Senate, the stumbling block is the idea of the government competing with private insurers. Liberals may have to swallow hard and accept a deal without a public plan in order to keep the legislation alive. As in the House, the compromise appears to be to the right of the political spectrum.

Republican Sen. Olympia Snowe of Maine, who voted for a version of the Senate bill in committee, has given the Democrats a possible way out. She's proposing to allow a government plan as a last resort, if after a few years premiums keep escalating and local health insurance markets remain in the grip of a few big companies. This is the "trigger" option.

Late-season hurricane takes aim at US Gulf Coast

NEW ORLEANS (AP)—Hurricane Ida, the first Atlantic hurricane to target the United States this year, plodded Sunday toward the Gulf Coast with 105 mph winds, bringing the threat of flooding and storm surges.

A hurricane warning extended more than 200 miles of coastline from Pascagoula, Miss., east to Indian Pass, Fla. Tropical storm warnings and hurricane watches are in effect across other areas of southeastern Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and the Florida Panhandle, including New Orleans. Louisiana's governor declared a state of emergency.

Authorities said Ida could make landfall as early as Tuesday morning, although it was forecast to weaken by then. Officials and residents kept a close eye on the Category 2 hurricane as it approached, though there were no immediate plans for evacuations.

Sunday night, Ida was located 400 miles south-southeast of the mouth of the Mississippi River and moving north-northwest near 14 mph. The latest forecast from the National Hurricane Center shows Ida brushing near Louisiana and Mississippi, then making landfall near Alabama before continuing across north Florida.

Yet many residents took the forecast in stride.

ACROSS THE NATION

Onlookers flock to site of Cleveland killings

CLEVELAND, Ohio (AP)—Reggie Turner stopped by a growing memorial to 11 victims of an alleged serial killer because he knew one of the women. Michelle Lee came to pay her respects as a mother and grandmother. Mark Mason and two buddies rode their motorcycles to just take a look. The street corner opposite the home dubbed Cleveland's "House of Horrors" buzzes with visits from mourners, well-wishers, politicians and the curious. "We wanted our children to understand what has occurred, to understand how people go missing," said Cliff Westwood, who brought his 9-year-old daughter and 6-year-old son by the house late Saturday afternoon.

Gov. Ed Rendell: Philadelphia transit strike over

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Gov. Ed Rendell says a transit strike that shut down Philadelphia's buses, subways and trolleys for nearly a week is over. The governor announced early Monday that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority had reached an agreement with its largest labor union on new contract provisions to end the strike. About 5,000 Transport Workers Local 234 workers walked off the job early last Tuesday. Rendell says the system will be back up and running in time for Monday morning's commute. During a brief press conference in downtown Philadelphia, the governor said SEPTA and the union had settled an earlier disagreement regarding a pension fund audit and made some changes in health care and dental benefits.

Ill. prosecutors seek journalism students' grades

CHICAGO (AP)—A Northwestern University professor and journalism students who spent three years investigating the case of a man convicted in the 1978 killing of a security guard believe they have evidence that shows prosecutors put the wrong man behind bars. But in the quest to prove his innocence, they may have to defend themselves, too. Cook County prosecutors have outraged the university and the journalism community by issuing subpoenas to professor David Protess seeking his students' grades, his syllabus and their private e-mails. Prosecutors claim since the team was made up of students, they may have been under pressure to prove the case to get a good grade. It's a first for Protess and his investigative reporting students, who have helped free 11 innocent men from prison, including death row, since 1996. Their work also is credited with prompting then-Gov. George Ryan to empty the state's death row in 2003, re-igniting a national debate on the death penalty.

Asia

Dalai Lama visits town near Tibet, angering China

TAWANG, India (AP)—Joyous Buddhist pilgrims welcomed the Dalai Lama back Sunday to the Himalayan town he first set foot in five decades ago while fleeing Chinese rule in his native Tibet—a rare trip close to his homeland that has angered Beijing.

The Dalai Lama's arrival here highlighted a lingering border dispute between India and China, exposed Beijing's ongoing sensitivities over Tibet and raised questions over who would succeed him as the region's spiritual leader.

Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Ma Zhaoxu said last week that the trip "once again exposes the nature of the Dalai Lama as anti-China."

The Dalai Lama, however, insisted the accusation was "baseless" and that he was only seeking to promote religious values, peace and harmony.

"My visit here is nonpolitical," he said soon after his arrival Sunday morning.

For the residents of Tawang, it seemed purely religious.

The streets were lined with prayer flags and banners welcoming the Dalai Lama and thousands braved the cold temperatures and biting wind to attend his five-day visit of prayer meetings and lectures on Buddhism.

AP

Tibetan spiritual leader the Dalai Lama arrives to preach in Tawang, in the northeastern Arunachal Pradesh state, India, Monday, Nov. 9, 2009.

"It made us very happy to catch a glimpse of him. Nobody is more important to us than him. The Dalai Lama is our god," said Karmayacha, who uses one name and traveled with her family from a village 20 miles (32 kilometers) away.

Monks clanged cymbals and sounded traditional Tibetan horns to greet the Dalai Lama as he arrived at the Tawang monastery—filled with fresh orange, white and red flowers—from a nearby helipad.

The Dalai Lama smiled and chatted with the gathered crowds. One monk shaded him with a giant yellow silk umbrella, while scores of others bowed before him as he walked into a hall to lead a prayer session.

The Dalai Lama first came to Tawang, which has close religious and political ties to Tibet, in 1959, when he fled communist rule. He has since made five visits to the town, the last in 2003.

At that time, he was ill, weary and suffering from dysentery, but when he finally made it here, he felt safe, he said Sunday.

In the days leading up to this visit—only his fifth trip here in the last half century—monks and residents painted the monasteries of Tawang and scrubbed the town.

Pilgrims arrived in packed trucks, others walked along narrow paths in the Himalayan foothills for as long as five days to hear a man they revere as a living god speak.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Police say suicide bomber kills 3 in Pakistan

PESHAWAR, Pakistan (AP)—A suicide bomber in a rickshaw detonated his explosives near a group of policemen in northwest Pakistan's main city of Peshawar, killing three people Monday, police said. The attack was the latest in a string of strikes that has killed more than 300 people over the past six weeks. The bloodshed appears aimed at distracting the government from its offensive against the Taliban in the South Waziristan tribal region. Five other people were wounded in the blast at an intersection on the main road that circles the city, police official Shaukat Khan said. TV footage showed a crane lifting the rickshaw's carcass to clear the road. The bomber was likely heading to a more crowded area but decided to set off his explosives when police stopped the rickshaw to check it, senior Peshawar police officer Liaquat Ali Khan said.

Filipino militants behead captive schoolteacher

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Suspected al-Qaida-linked militants in the southern Philippines beheaded a schoolteacher after kidnapping him last month, officials said Monday. The severed head of Gabriel Canizares, 36, was left in a bag at a gas station on Jolo Island, three weeks after suspected Abu Sayyaf militants stopped a passenger minibus and dragged him away in front of his colleagues, said regional military commander Maj. Gen. Benjamin Dolorfino. The militants, notorious for bombings, ransom kidnappings and beheadings, were reportedly demanding a ransom of 2 million pesos ($42,000) for his release. The Abu Sayyaf, which is suspected of receiving funds from al-Qaida, is believed to have about 400 fighters on Jolo and nearby Basilan Island. The group has been sheltering militants from the larger Southeast Asian terrorist group Jemaah Islamiyah, the military says.

2 killed by strong central Indonesian quake

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP)—A strong undersea earthquake killed two people and damaged buildings on the remote island of Sumbawa in central Indonesia, officials said Monday. At least 20 people were hospitalized on the island after the 6.7-magnitude temblor, many of them with broken bones, said Rustam Pakaya, the head of the Health Ministry's crisis center. He said at least 40 people were injured. The quake struck at 3:41 a.m. local time (1941 GMT) near a small island chain just east of the Lombok resort island. It had a depth of 11 miles (17.7 kilometers) and the epicenter was about 830 miles (1,335 kilometers) east of the Indonesian capital, Jakarta. Two people were killed in a part of Sumbawa called Ambalawe, local government spokesman Abdul Wahab Usman said.

China sends panda expert to Taiwan to aid breeding

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP)—Nothing like a little time apart to rekindle the affections that could lead to a baby panda. So says a panda expert sent by China to Taiwan to advise on how to encourage mating by the pair given by Beijing last December to mark the two sides' growing friendship. After inspecting the pandas at the Taipei Zoo on Sunday, Chinese panda expert Zhang Hemin suggested a separation of a month or two might boost the feeling of attraction needed to reproduce. "They may have more interest toward each other after a brief separation," said Zhang, a researcher at the Wolong Natural Reserve in western Sichuan province where the pandas are from. China presented Tuan Tuan and Yuan Yuan, which together mean "reunion," to Taiwan last December amid warming ties between the mainland and the island, which split amid civil war in 1949.

Obama confronts an Asia reshaped by China's rise

BEIJING (AP)—Days after coming to power in September, Japan's new prime minister broached forming a new East Asian trading bloc with rival China—one that would exclude the United States.

Some in Washington took it as a snub from the nation that has been America's rock in Asia for decades. Even more, Tokyo's new rhetoric underscored how China's rapid rise to power is challenging Washington's once-dominant sway in the region.

This is the reality President Barack Obama confronts as he departs Thursday for his first Asia trip, perhaps his most challenging overseas journey yet. He'll find a region outgrowing a half-century of U.S. supremacy and questioning America's relevance to its future. More so than Obama's previous foreign trips, this nine-day, four-country tour has the president on something like a salvage mission.

The trip also comes at a delicate time for Obama at home.

He is wrestling with one of the toughest decisions of his 10-month presidency, a war strategy for Afghanistan, and is urging Congress to approve his biggest domestic priority, health care.

Those pressing concerns make it notable that he is spending so much time away—a sign of Asia's importance to the U.S. and the need to tend to relationships there without delay—though he put off his original departure by a day over the weekend because of Thursday's deadly shooting spree at the Fort Hood military base in Texas. Obama will speak to U.S. troops in Alaska and South Korea, with his much-awaited decision on more troops for the Afghanistan war probably still pending.

Obama stops first in Japan, a traditional U.S. stalwart now looking toward closer engagement with China and the rest of Asia. He makes a two-city stop in China, where leaders proud of their country's one-generation leap to prosperity seek a bigger say in shaping the region's affairs.

The president also visits Singapore for a summit of Asia-Pacific leaders, where his participation is being cut by a day, and wraps up his trip in South Korea. Those countries are having to accommodate a more muscular China while wondering whether a U.S. weakened by financial crisis is in decline.

Karzai vows to keep corrupt officials out of govt

KABUL (AP)—The embattled Afghan president pledged Sunday that there would be no place for corrupt officials in his new administration—a demand made by Washington and its international partners as they ponder sending more troops to confront the Taliban and shore up his government.

Also Sunday, NATO reported three more coalition soldiers—one American and two Britons—died in combat with the Taliban in western and southern areas. The latest losses pushed Britain's combat death toll in the eight-year Afghan war to 201.

NATO forces said they were still searching for two American paratroopers who disappeared Wednesday while trying to recover airdropped supplies that had fallen into a river. Afghan police said the two Americans were swept away by the current and may have drowned.

With casualties mounting, corruption has become a frontburner issue in Afghanistan, with President Barack Obama and other world leaders under pressure from their own constituents to explain why they are sending young soldiers to fight and die in defense of a government riddled with graft, cronyism and fraud.

Obama is considering a request from the top U.S. and NATO commander to send tens of thousands more U.S. troops to curb the growing Taliban insurgency.

Hamid Karzai was proclaimed the winner last week in a fraud-marred presidential election after his only remaining challenger dropped out ahead of a runoff, saying he did not expect a fair vote.

Pakistani gov't pressured on post-offensive plan

ISLAMABAD (AP)—As Pakistan's army plows ahead with its offensive in South Waziristan, its success is at risk because the government has yet to come up with a plan to run and rebuild the lawless territory so that the Taliban and al-Qaida don't re-emerge.

The Pakistani army launched a ground offensive in the Afghan border region in mid-October, pitting some 30,000 troops against up to 8,000 insurgents in an operation praised by U.S officials. In recent days, the soldiers have entered three major Taliban bases in South Waziristan, largely securing one of them, though many militants are believed to have simply fled the fighting.

But the army's battlefield success could be pointless in the long-run, critics say, because lawmakers have yet to present a clear post-conflict plan for the tribal region—a dithering that could give space for the Taliban and their al-Qaida allies to regroup.

"I think they are running out of time," said Rasul Bakhsh Rais, a Pakistani political expert.

Pakistan's northwest tribal regions lie outside the normal government structure in the rest of the country. Power is vested in tribal elders and appointed "political agents." Residents are subject to colonial-era laws whose features include collective punishment.

Many of the tribal leaders are dead or in hiding, brought down by the Pakistani Taliban in their climb to power in recent years. Much of the economy is based on drugs and weapons smuggling. Islamic conservatism is the norm, and education is so limited that the female literacy rate is just 3 percent.

The army has undertaken four major operations in South Waziristan since 2004, the most recent being the biggest.

World

WORLD BRIEFS

Brazil student expelled after wearing mini-dress

SAO PAULO (AP)—A Brazilian university has expelled a woman who was heckled by hundreds of fellow students for wearing a short, pink dress to class—publicly accusing her Sunday of immorality. The private Bandeirante University in Sao Bernardo do Campo, outside Sao Paulo, said 20-year-old Geisy Arruda disrespected "ethical principles, academic dignity and morality." Bandeirante University published newspaper advertisements Sunday accusing Arruda of attending class with "inadequate clothing" and having a provocative attitude that was "incompatible with the university environment."

Saudis take mountain from Yemen rebels

SAN'A, Yemen (AP)—Saudi Arabian forces seized a strategic mountain straddling the border with Yemen and cleared it of Shiite rebels after five days of fighting that have left three Saudi soldiers dead, a Saudi defense official said Sunday. Meanwhile, rebels said they shot down a Yemeni fighter jet. While Yemen acknowledged the crash, it attributed it to a "technical error." Saudi forces began shelling and bombing rebel positions last week, dramatically escalating a five-year conflict between Yemen's weak central government and rebels in the north of the impoverished country.

New fair targets France's 260,000 annual divorces

PARIS (AP)—The city of romance got a lesson in love's hard knocks Sunday, as thousands flocked to the French capital's first divorce fair. In France, nearly one out of two marriages ends in divorce, according to the country's National Institute of Demographic Studies. More than 130,000 divorces were registered in 2007, as compared to just 50,000 three decades ago. The "New Start" trade fair aimed to tap into that booming market by bringing together 60 stands offering up both services obviously related to separation—law firms and counselors—and also more obscure disciplines aimed at helping people get back on their feet, like tarot card readers, makeover specialists and self-esteem coaches.

Iraq electoral law passes, sets up national vote

BAGHDAD (AP)—Iraq's parliament ended weeks of debate Sunday and passed a long-delayed law paving the way for the planned January election to go forward, sidestepping a crisis that could have delayed the U.S. troop withdrawal.

The decision appeared to resolve a key sticking point—who will be allowed to vote in the disputed, oil-rich city of Kirkuk. The issue had threatened to delay Iraq's key parliamentary elections, which in turn would affect how quickly American combat forces could leave the country.

In a sign of how intensely Washington was following the debate, U.S. Ambassador Christopher Hill could be seen shuttling between various political factions before the law's passage. President Barack Obama, speaking at the White House, welcomed the new legislation.

"This is an important milestone as the Iraqi people continue to take responsibility for their future. I want to congratulate Iraq's leaders for reaching this agreement," Obama said. "The United States will continue to stand with Iraq as a strong partner and as a friend."

Iraq's prime minister, Nouri al-Maliki, in a statement posted on his Web site, hailed the election law's passage as a "historic victory of the will of the people," and described it as a strong response to the people who are trying to undermine the country's security.

The U.S. ambassador, speaking to reporters after the vote, said the American troop drawdown will proceed as scheduled. Military commanders have said the U.S. troop withdrawal would start in earnest about 60 days after the vote, the idea being that the country would be on stable footing by then.

"What is important is that with the election law, we are very much on schedule for the drawdown," Hill said.

Under the president's plan, all U.S. combat troops will be out of the country by the end of August 2010, leaving about 50,000 trainers and support troops, who in turn would leave by the end of 2011.

It was not clear exactly when the election would be held—Jan. 16 as originally planned or a later date in January. The head of the Independent High Electoral Commission, Faraj al-Haidari, told The Associated Press that he expected the vote to be held within a week of Jan. 16.

Deputy Parliament Speaker, Khalid al-Attiyah said it would likely be held January 21 or 23. The Iraqi constitution mandates that the vote takes place in January, but does not specify which day.

Germany celebrates memory of Berlin Wall falling

BERLIN (AP)—With concerts and memorials on Monday, Germans will celebrate the day the Berlin Wall came crashing down 20 years ago.

On that cold night, they danced atop the wall, arms raised in victory, hands clasped in friendship and giddy hope. Years of separation and anxiety melted into the unbelievable reality of freedom and a future without border guards, secret police, informers and rigid communist control.

Germans are celebrating with concerts boasting Beethoven and Bon Jovi; a memorial service for the 136 people killed trying to cross over from 1961 to 1989; candle lightings and 1,000 towering plastic foam dominoes to be placed along the wall's route and tipped over.

■ ■ ■

BERLIN (AP)—U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton urged Europeans and Americans on Sunday to see the anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall as a call to action against new global threats.

On the eve of celebrations marking 20 years since the collapse of the wall that divided East and West Berlin, Clinton said the hard work that went into ending the Cold War must be channeled to meet fresh challenges, including the fights against extremism and climate change.

As the Obama administration looks to often reluctant European allies to bolster their NATO forces in Afghanistan, Clinton said Monday's commemoration of Nov. 9, 1989, the night "when history pierced the concrete and concertina wire," must look forward and not back.

■ ■ ■

AP

Tourists visit the remains of the Berlin Wall at the eve of the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall in Berlin, Germany, Sunday, Nov. 8, 2009.

On Nov. 9, 1989, East Germans came in droves, riding their sputtering Trabants, motorcycles and rickety bicycles. Hundreds, then thousands, then hundreds of thousands crossed over the following days.

Stores in West Berlin stayed open late and banks gave out 100 Deutschemarks in "welcome money," then worth about $50, to each East German visitor.

The party lasted four days and by Nov. 12 more than 3 million of East Germany's 16.6 million people had visited, nearly a third of them to West Berlin, the rest through gates opening up along the rest of the fenced, mined frontier that cut their country in two.

Sections of the nearly 155 kilometers (100 miles) of wall were pulled down and knocked over. Tourists chiseled off chunks to keep as souvenirs. Tearful families reunited. Bars gave out free drinks. Strangers kissed and toasted each other with champagne.

Klaus-Hubert Fugger, a student at the Free University in West Berlin, was having drinks at a pub when people began coming "who looked a bit different."

Rescuers dig for survivors in buried Salvador town

VERAPAZ, El Salvador (AP)—Soldiers and residents dug through rock and debris looking for dozens of people missing when a mudslide covered a town in El Salvador, part of a wave of flooding and landslides that has killed at least 124 people in this Central American country.

Days of heavy rains, indirectly linked to Hurricane Ida's passage through the region, caused mud and boulders to sweep down the side of the Chichontepec volcano before dawn Sunday, burying homes and cars in the town of Verapaz, about 30 miles (50 kilometers) outside the capital, San Salvador.

Homes, streets and cars were swallowed by the mud in the town of about 3,000 inhabitants.

"It was terrible. The rocks came down on top of the houses and split them in two, and split the pavement," said Manuel Melendez, 61, who whose home was destroyed. "I heard people screaming all around."

Amid a persistent drizzle, rescuers dug frantically for survivors late Sunday with shovels and even their bare hands. But the search was made difficult by collapsed walls, boulders and downed power lines that blocked heavy machinery.

President Mauricio Funes declared a national emergency and called the damages incalculable.

"The images that we have seen today are of a devastated country," Funes said on local television.

El Salvador's Civil Protection agency raised the death toll by to 124 late Sunday, with another 60 people missing. It didn't break down the deaths by location, but the deaths were concentrated in San Salvador and San Vicente province, where Verapaz is located. Red Cross spokesman Carlos Lopez Mendoza said earlier that 60 people were missing in Verapaz.

Matias Mendoza, 26, was at home in Verapaz with his wife Claudia and their year-old son, Franklin, when the earth began moving.

"It was about two in the morning when the rain started coming down harder, and the earth started shaking," Mendoza recalled. "I warned my wife and grabbed my son, and all of a sudden we heard a sound. The next thing I knew I was lying among parts of the walls of my house."

"A few minutes later, I found my wife and my son in the middle of the rubble, and, thank God, we're alive," said Mendoza, who suffered cuts on his cheek that emergency workers stitched up.

Almost 7,000 people saw their homes damaged by landslides or cut off by floodwaters following three days of downpours from a low-pressure system indirectly related to Hurricane Ida, which brushed Mexico's Cancun resort on Sunday before steaming into the Gulf of Mexico.

Chavez to troops: Prepare for war with Colombia

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP)—President Hugo Chavez on Sunday ordered Venezuela's military to prepare for a possible armed conflict with Colombia, saying his country's soldiers should be ready if the United States attempts to provoke a war between the South American neighbors.

Chavez said Venezuela could end up going to war with Colombia as tensions between them rise, and he warned that if a conflict broke out "it could extend throughout the whole continent."

"The best way to avoid war is preparing for it," Chavez told military officers during his weekly television and radio program. Venezuela's socialist leader has also cited a recent deal between Bogota and Washington giving U.S. troops greater access to military bases as a threat to regional stability.

The government of Colombian President Alvaro rejected what it called "threats of war from Venezuela's government," saying it would protest Chavez's comments to the Organization of American States and the U.N. Security Council.

"Colombia never has, and never will, make an act of war," said government spokesman Cesar Mauricio Velasquez. He did not elaborate on Colombia's plans to bring the issue to the OAS and the United Nations.

Colombian and U.S. officials have repeatedly said Venezuela shouldn't be concerned about the base deal since it is aimed exclusively at boosting the fight against drug traffickers and insurgents in Colombia, which is a major cocaine producer struggling with a decades-old internal conflict.

Tensions along the Venezuela-Colombia border have been exacerbated in recent weeks by a series of shootings and slayings.

Overdrive

2010 WHEEGO WHIP LSV

GOING ELECTRIC, AT 25 MILES PER HOUR

THE WASHINGTON POST

The Wheego Whip LSV (low-speed vehicle) is a world-sourced electric car with 33 percent of its parts from North America and with final assembly in Ontario, Canada. The front-wheel-drive subcompact is among the first of what will be a wide range of electric vehicles with varied capabilities.

BY WARREN BROWN
THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON—It's a tough sell.

Even its name, Wheego Whip LSV, is a marketing obstacle.

"It sounds like a toy," said Ria Manglapus, my Washington Post associate for vehicle evaluations.

It looks like a toy, too, reminiscent of the Mercedes-Benz-sponsored Smart Fortwo city car.

But the Smart Fortwo, running on gasoline, can go up to 90 miles per hour, assuming there are no crosswinds. The all-electric, 2010 Wheego Whip is a low-speed vehicle, thus the "LSV" moniker, limited to 25 miles per hour.

In a perfect world, the Wheego Whip would make perfect sense as a neighborhood automobile, particularly in neighborhoods with posted speed limits of 35 miles per hour and lower. It consumes no fossil fuels, emits no fog-enhancing pollutants, and disturbs no civil decibel levels. It doesn't gobble precious shopping-center parking space. It is pedestrian friendly, which is a good thing in places such as my Arlington, Va., neighborhood, which periodically is crowded with middle- and high school students ambling to and from their respective campuses.

But, alas, the world is dangerously imperfect.

Here in Arlington, some residential areas are fond of traffic-interruption devices—roundabouts and annoying road bumps, which local officials call "speed humps." The roundabouts and bump-humped streets do little to halt speeding vehicles. I experienced that firsthand when I dared to drive the Wheego Whip during Arlington's rush hours—7:30 to 9 a.m. and 4:30 to 7 p.m.

I annoyed presumably "green" drivers in gas-electric Toyota Prius cars. I thought they'd be happy to see a fellow motorist going "green," tooling along well within the speed-limits of multi-humped residential streets, in a little all-electric car.

But once they'd sated their curiosity about the odd-looking, slow-moving little car in front of them, many motorists tailgated me, flashed their lights, honked and ultimately zoomed around me, with their cars and trucks undulating over speed humps like a herd of animals roaming an African savanna.

Ironically, on the busy, commercial Lee Highway, which is free of roundabouts and humps and is given to more traffic volume, the Wheego Whip made more sense. Lee Highway's bumper-to-bumper rush-hour traffic moves so slowly, a 25-mile-per-hour vehicle fits well within that motoring milieu.

But that is hardly a selling point, especially for a front-wheel-drive car that is bereft of air bags, electronic stability control, and robust side-impact crash protection because it essentially is meant to be operated in the manner of a golf cart.

The Wheego Whip LSV has all of the appearance, pricing (with a base manufacturer's suggested retail price of $18,995), and much of the function of a real automobile. But it is not a car meant for the mass market.

Instead, it is an automobile meant for visionaries, for people who can see beyond gasoline because they are keenly aware that gasoline, like the oil from which it comes, is not forever. It is a car for committed geeks, people who know that all-electric vehicles eventually will occupy a significant place among personal-transportation products and who are willing to accept short-term sacrifices and other trade-offs in support of that development.

NUTS & BOLTS

THE BOTTOM LINE
The Wheego Whip LSV, a world-sourced electric car with 33 percent of its parts from North America and with final assembly in Ontario, Canada, marks a beginning. It is among the first of what will be a wide range of electric vehicles with varied capabilities—including entry-level, low-speed neighborhood cars, such as the Wheego and Chrysler's GEM automobiles; mid-range, highway-capable models, such as the forthcoming Chevrolet Volt, Ford Focus Electric and Nissan Leaf; upscale performance models, such as the Fisker Karma and the Tesla; and commercial delivery models, such as those being developed by Smith Electric Vehicles of Kansas City, Mo. We look forward to driving them all.

RIDE, ACCELERATION AND HANDLING
The ride is bouncy. "Acceleration" is a euphemism here. This car is slow. Handling is decent (on straight, well-maintained roads) to tedious (in curves and on poorly maintained roads).

HEAD-TURNING QUOTIENT
It is an alien presence on local roads, attracting attention for all of the wrong and right reasons.

BODY STYLE/LAYOUT
The 2010 Wheego Whip LSV is an all-electric, subcompact, front-wheel-drive, low-speed neighborhood vehicle with two side doors, a key-operated rear hatch door, and a lead-acid battery pack beneath the rear floor.

PROPULSION SYSTEM
The power pack consists of 12 8-volt lead-acid batteries for a total of 96 volts. The batteries supply energy to an alternating current, brushless motor (type: AC41). Equivalent peak horsepower is 40 horsepower at a maximum 3,200 rotations per minute. Maximum torque is 110 foot-pounds. There is no transmission per se. Instead, the electric motor is mated to a forward-reverse shifter that operates the car as if it were in permanent second gear.

CAPACITIES
There are seats for two people and cargo room for a week's worth of groceries for driver and occupant.

RANGE
Real-world range is 40 miles driving distance per full charge. Range could be extended to 50 or 55 miles under ideal conditions—good roads; driving under 25 miles per hour; not using the heater, air conditioner or radio. Range is negatively affected by increased speed, uphill driving, onboard weight, cold weather, fast starts and stops.

PLUG-IN
A full charge takes eight hours using regular house current—115 to 120 volts.

SAFETY
As matters now stand, neighborhood low-speed electric vehicles are not required to have air bags or roll-over crash protection. They do have seat belts. Use them!

PRICE
The base price of the 2010 Wheego Whip LSV is $18,995. Estimated dealer's invoice price on that model is $17,000. Price as tested is $22,785, including $1,995 for air conditioner, $795 for a dual charger device, and a $1,000 destination fee. Estimated dealer's price as tested is $20,785. A federal rebate of $7,500 applies to the purchase of this car, reducing its effective price to $15,285. Prices are sourced from Wheego.

THANKS
To the Smart Wheels Division of the Ted Britt Automotive Group in Fairfax, Va., which gave me no-strings-attached access to the car.

Prius top-selling car in Japan for sixth month

TOKYO (AP)—Toyota's popular Prius hybrid was the top-selling car in Japan in October for the sixth straight month, helped by tax breaks and government subsidies for environmentally friendly vehicles, an industry group said Friday.

Toyota Motor Corp., the world's biggest automaker, sold 26,918 Prius cars last month, according to the Japan Automobile Dealers Association. That was a big jump from 6,341 Prius cars sold in October last year.

Surging demand for the Prius helped Toyota post a surprise profit Thursday.

The Japanese auto giant posted better-than-expected net income of 21.8 billion yen ($242 million) for the July-September period after three straight losing quarters. The company also halved its expected loss for the fiscal year.

Honda Motor Co.'s Fit compact was No. 2 in October with 15,444 units sold, the association said. Although the Fit isn't a hybrid, it still qualifies for tax breaks because it's fuel-efficient.

Ford to put air bags into back seat belts of SUV

By DEE-ANN DURBIN
AP AUTO WRITER

DETROIT (AP)—Air bags have long been mounted in the steering wheel, dashboard and sides of vehicles. Now, they're in the seat belts.

Ford Motor Co. plans to introduce seat belt-mounted air bags in the back seat of the 2011 Ford Explorer sport utility vehicle, which will hit the market next fall. Ford says it's the first automaker to mass produce the technology.

The belts have a cylindrical air bag that stretches from the buckle to the shoulder and fits inside a pocket sewn into the belt. The car sends a signal that releases the bag, which inflates more gently than a front air bag, so it's safer for children.

Srini Sundararajan, the Ford engineer who was chiefly responsible for developing the device, says the wider belts and bags help distribute crash forces across the occupant's chest, so there's less chance of serious injury. It also supports the head and neck.

"The top two lifesaving devices today are the seat belt and the air bag. This combines them into one great feature," Sundararajan said.

Clarence Ditlow, head of the nonprofit Center for Auto Safety, says the belts are particularly effective at protecting the elderly, who are more frail.

"You often end up with broken ribs" during a crash with a conventional seat belt, Ditlow said.

Ford has been working on the technology for a decade and had to overcome numerous challenges bringing it to market.

AP

In this photo made Monday, Nov. 2, 2009, Mary McWilliams tries a seat belt-mounted air bag on a demonstrator at Ford Motor Co. in Dearborn, Mich., Monday, Nov. 2, 2009.

Life & Style

Carey forgoes beauty for empathy in 'Precious'

By CHRIS LEE
(C) 2009, LOS ANGELES TIMES

Mariah Carey, typically glamorous here, says "I had to lose all vanity" for her role in "Precious." LOS ANGELES TIMES

You'd be forgiven for not recognizing Mariah Carey in her role as a dowdy welfare caseworker in the urban drama "Precious: Based on the Novel 'Push' by Sapphire."

The legendarily high-maintenance pop diva underwent a soup-to-nuts physical transformation, checking her glossy celebrity patina at the door to convincingly portray the film's Ms. Weiss: a drab but deeply empathetic soul helping a troubled teenager in 1980s Harlem. Far from the image Carey has cultivated for years, the character is no oil painting of music-video pulchritude, with her lank hair, a wardrobe of rayon sweater-coats and, yes, even a sparse mustache creeping across her upper lip.

"I had to lose all vanity," Carey said. "I had to change my demeanor, my inside, layers of who I am, to become that woman."

How R&B's most unabashedly glamorous chanteuse came to sport facial hair—how Carey came to defy all expectations by delivering what some are describing as an Oscar-worthy performance in "Precious" at all—is one of those quirky sagas upon which indie film-world dreams are made.

Turns out the alto with a five-octave range wasn't director-producer Lee Daniels' first choice. He had considered Jane Fonda for the role and cast Carey only when Oscar-winning British actress Helen Mirren dropped out at the 11th hour.

Daniels, who became chummy with the singer after casting her in his indie drama "Tennessee," implemented Carey's deglamorization process as a means to two ends—to ensure that audiences wouldn't be "taken out of the picture by seeing Mariah Carey"; but also to antagonize the singer for her own good by making her look homely in the extreme.

"It wasn't just the director in me," Daniels explained earlier this week, "but the big brother torturing his sister. This was just to irritate her. At what point would she start screaming and run up out of this chair?"

■ ■ ■ ■

To put a fine point on how sheerly unlikely all of this is, one need look no further than Carey's 2001 star vehicle "Glitter." A semi-autobiographical musical romance, the movie was trounced by critics, fizzled at the box office and netted the performer a Razzie Award for worst actress.

But Since "Precious" premiered at this year's Sundance Film Festival, critics have been singing a different tune. A reviewer for *Variety* called Carey's performance "pitch-perfect" while *The New Yorker*'s Anthony Lane asks, "Hold on: a stern, song-free, compassionate piece of acting from Mariah Carey? ... It's for real."

Nonetheless, Carey finds her appearance in "Precious" painful.

"Hideosity!" she exclaimed, raising her hands in mock horror. Carey was seated on the patio of the Polo Lounge in Beverly Hills wearing a plunging black gown, exhausted from a whistle-stop tour through Korea, Japan and Brazil in support of her latest album, "Confessions of an Imperfect Angel" (which peaked at No. 3 on the Billboard 200 album chart earlier this year), but still impressively blinged-out in diamonds. The divide between her luxe life and latest movie role could not have been more vividly illustrated, but Carey, 40, left their disconnect unmentioned. "I am glad people are telling me they don't recognize me," she continued. "But when it comes to my scenes, I get like, 'Oh, I don't know if I can look.'"

> *When people say, 'I didn't know she had it in her,' they don't know my life. They don't know my childhood and what I went through except for a very basic story, because I don't choose to tell the world.*

Based on the acclaimed 1996 novel "Push," "Precious" took both the Grand Jury Prize and the audience award at Sundance and hits theaters in limited release Friday. The film—executive produced by Oprah Winfrey and Tyler Perry—follows Claireece "Precious" Jones (newcomer Gabourey Sidibe), a 16-year-old Harlem girl whose hard-knock life provides a taxonomy of urban poverty's worst ills. She's illiterate, on welfare, morbidly overweight and pregnant with a second child by her own father. After enrolling in a literacy program, Precious is reluctantly assigned to visit a social worker: Carey's Ms. Weiss.

"She still doesn't have a first name," the singer said with a laugh, popping a blini with a glinting mound of caviar into her mouth. In her few but unforgettable scenes, the character plays a pivotal role in helping Precious pull out of her downward spiral.

■ ■ ■ ■

Movie history is studded with A-list actors who subverted their prescribed images in a bid for greater respect and awards-season glory. A few recent examples: Nicole Kidman's golden-statue-grabbing turn (courtesy of a prosthetic schnoz) in "The Hours," and Charlize Theron's uglying up as a serial killer for her Oscar-winning portrayal in "Monster."

Unlike some other performers, ego-driven careerism was hardly the deciding factor in Carey's transformation. When Mirren, who previously worked with Daniels on his 2005 directorial debut "Shadowboxer," dropped out of "Precious" just days before she was scheduled to be on set, the director had to scramble; there wasn't time to audition replacement actresses. Cue phone call from Carey.

"Mariah calls me, 'Come over, dahling.' I said, 'I'm not in the mood. I gotta cast this movie,'" Daniels recalled. "'What movie, dah-ling?'"

The two had forged what they describe as a brother-sister level of closeness working on "Tennessee," a little-seen road drama Daniels produced that had a brief theatrical run this summer.

"I said, 'I'm doing "Push."' She had read the book. A light bulb went on over my head," Daniels said.

With Mirren's blessing, he hired Carey. "I wanted to tap into what people don't see in her," Daniels said.

"I wanted to show the person I know she is when we're alone. One of the smartest, most intuitive women I've ever met."

Carey cleared her schedule and traveled to the "Precious" set in northernmost Harlem by taxi, forbidden from arriving with entourage in tow. With only days to prepare, the performer says she based her characterization on a therapist she knew but also on what she cryptically describes as firsthand knowledge of the social-welfare system.

Asked what those experiences might be, Carey—a Long Island native of Afro-Venezuelan/Irish-American decent who was raised by her opera-singer mother—declined to specify.

"When people say, 'I didn't know she had it in her,' they don't know my life," Carey said. "They don't know my childhood and what I went through except for a very basic story, because I don't choose to tell the world."

Transcending simple stunt casting, the performance strikes a unique dramatic tone, balancing a lived-in physical presence with world-weary empathy.

"I went, 'What does this woman feel every day with people coming at her, wanting something from her?' And there may be people who are slightly disingenuous. Because I know a little of what goes on, believe it or not."

A gay and opinionated aesthete, Daniels personally saw to uglying her up.

"We created Ms. Weiss on the spot," he said. "We started with the bags under the eyes. Then I said, 'I'm going to put a mustache on you.' Bound her boobs down, put this gray makeup on her, found this cheesy rayon material, put it on her. I could see her hands shaking. I was nervous for her, but I felt it was good for her to be out of her bubble."

The pop diva said she hopes to continue in independent films but has no plans to give up music. But before leaving the topic of facial hair, she wanted to get something clear. "Do I look like I have a mustache?" Carey asked.

She craned her neck forward and thrust her upper lip in a visitor's direction. Nope, no 'stache.

"I'm not very hairy," Carey continued, displaying her forearm on which not a single hair could be seen. "I've never had that issue."

After they clicked, romance was for real

By ELLEN MCCARTHY
(C) 2009, THE WASHINGTON POST

THE WASHINGTON POST

Jill Stewman, formerly of Portland, Ore., says Algie Bhoomz, from Montclair, N.J., is "exactly the same person" she met online at RedLightCenter.com, a virtual-reality site. As their friendship blossomed, the two also began talking on the phone and via webcam for long hours.

WASHINGTON—A recent study by four academics, including professors from Harvard Business School and Duke University, suggests that online dating sites regularly leave users disappointed because they present potential matches as a rundown of characteristics—age, race, religion, income—that in no way embody the full measure of a person.

Vitamins and laundry detergent, they assert, are quantifiable things that can be purchased with reliable satisfaction through the Internet. Romantic partners, however, must be experienced to be properly evaluated, like a restaurant or a perfume.

But the authors don't predict the demise of online dating. They just think singles might be better served looking for love with a little help from their avatars.

That would put Jill Stewman and Algie Bhoomz ahead of the curve.

Stewman and Bhoomz first "met" late last fall on RedLightCenter.com, a virtual-reality site designed to mimic Amsterdam's freewheeling red-light district.

Stewman, 36, was living in Portland, Ore., and, after hearing about the site from friends, logged on to just see what it was. Hours later, she'd built an avatar and begun to explore.

"To me it was really amazing," recalls the marketing professional. "Just being able to walk around—you're this little person and everyone's talking. Being able to walk into these rooms and clubs with music and people dancing."

Soon she was visiting the site every day. So was Bhoomz, a 36-year-old customer service representative from Montclair, N.J. Both had virtual flings and flirtations with other avatars before beginning an online courtship of their own in January.

"We started talking and realized we had a lot in common," Stewman says. They would meet in the online world every night to send their avatars out dancing, chatting, playing games and engaging in virtual intimacies.

The two also began talking on the phone and via webcam for long hours. Because profiles of the people behind the avatars exist on the site, they had seen photos of each other and knew the basics regarding age, occupation and location.

On March 16 their avatars were married in an online ceremony witnessed by 60 RedLightCenter.com friends. An additional 20 came to the reception, on a virtual yacht.

"We had the whole place sobbing," Bhoomz says.

"Yeah, we wrote our own vows," Stewman adds. "And they were pretty mushy."

Two weeks later, when Stewman's grandmother in Minnesota died, Bhoomz flew out to meet her there.

"It didn't really give me a chance to get really nervous and freak out," Stewman says. "I just went to the airport and got him."

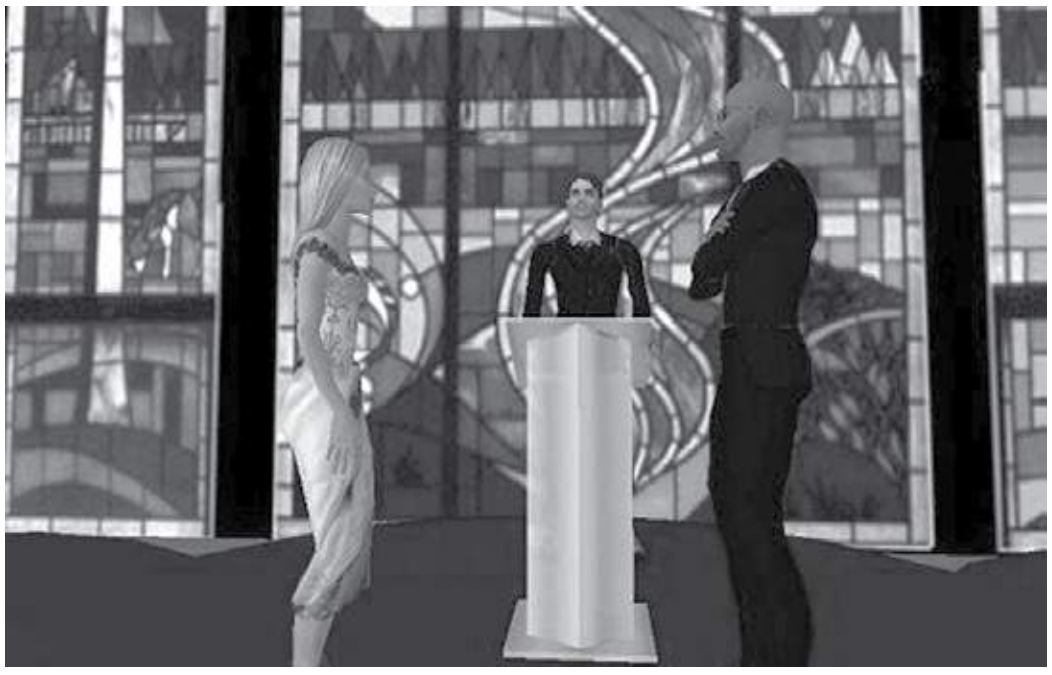
"It was just like it was on the phone or on the game," he says. "We had spent so much time together between the game, Skype, the phone and all that, that we pretty much knew everything about each other."

Stewman says the person she met in real life is "exactly the same person" she met online. On May 15 they finished a cross-country drive to move Stewman to New Jersey, where the two now live together.

Match.com and eHarmony aren't likely to turn themselves into cyber singles-worlds anytime soon, but Stewman's experience does support the academics' claim.

"I think it was easier than going to a dating site and looking at someone's profile and then you e-mail each other back and forth," she says. "The interaction is more there."

Bhoomz doesn't visit RedLightCenter.com much anymore, but Stewman still logs on to talk to friends. These days her virtual life and her real one are both, she reports, "pretty wonderful."



THE WASHINGTON POST

In March, Jill Stewman's and Algie Bhoomz's avatars were married in an online ceremony witnessed by 60 RedLightCenter.com friends. An additional 20 came to the reception, on a virtual yacht.

Getting up to speed on the power of attraction

By ELLEN MCCARTHY
(C) 2009, THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON—Eli Finkel was still an undergrad when he realized "somebody could spend his life asking questions about relationships, trying to find the answers to those questions and then teaching interested young minds about the research."

But when, as a newly minted psychology professor teaching a course on romantic relationships, he faced questions from a discerning student about how couples paired off, he was stumped.

"I kept being like, `I don't know and the field doesn't really know,' " he recalls. Research on attraction had been done in the '50s and '60s but was largely abandoned after that. It has come back into academic fashion in recent years, however, led in part by Finkel's work with that former student, Paul Eastwick, now an assistant professor at Texas A&M.

Speed-dating events became their petri dish of choice—"it was this extraordinarily rich social context for studying initial attraction," Finkel explains.

In a 2005 study, they looked at whether the characteristics singles say they want in a partner match what they actually pursue. On paper, women reported a greater desire for earning potential and status; men were more interested in physical attractiveness. In person at speed-dating events, that discrepancy went away—"women want really good-looking men every bit as much as men want really good-looking women," Finkel says. And financial prospects were no less important to men than women.

The take-away, as Finkel sees it: "We tend not to have the insight that we think we do into our romantic preferences."

"Don't read a profile of somebody on Match.com and assume `Oh, well, that person doesn't match my shopping list of characteristics I need in a partner so there's no way I should go on a date with her,' " he cautions. "We can't evaluate people as abstractions. ... Life isn't lived on paper. It's lived in flesh-and-blood encounters, and there's magic that can happen in those encounters."

Another of Finkel and Eastwick's studies found that when it comes to platonic relationships, if a person tends to like everyone, that goodwill is more likely to be reciprocated. But in romantic relationships, that wasn't the case. If a single guy digs ALL the women in the room, Finkel explains, "the women don't like him back."

The turn-on, he continues, comes when a person feels "uniquely desired." "When he or she has set sights on me, that seems to be something of an aphrodisiac," says the 34-year-old psychologist, who was set up with his wife by his grandmother.

Finkel and Eastwick's most recent study, published last month, questions why women are so often found to be more selective in choosing partners than men.

In loving memory of

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April 5, 1979-November 4, 2009

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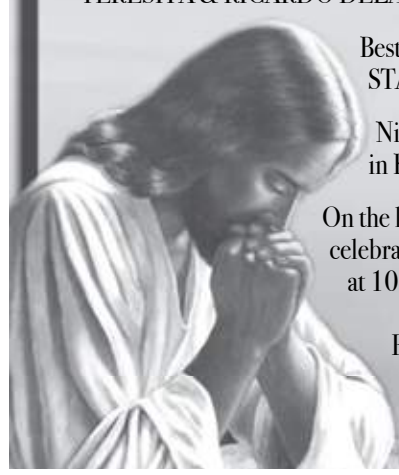
†Grand Father : PATRICO AUREO
LEONCIO ALAIUPAYAN
†Grand Mother: CATALINA AUREO
AVELINA ALAMPAYAN

Survived by:

Mother: MYRNA A. MESA
Step-Father: LUIS MESA
Kids: KYLE CRISTINE (DAUGHTER)
CHRISTOPHER JACOB (SON)
Sister & Spouse: HAYDEE & RICHARD REYES
(MARIA & CRISTIAN)

Auntie, Uncle & Cousins: LINEL "TOTO" & EDNA AUREO, MACAHITO FAMILY, CONCEPCION & ANTONIO REYES (KATHLYN JOYCE)
TERESITA & RICARDO DELA CRUZ (RITCHELL, RICHARD, JUN JUN & RICA)

Best friends: RYAN RIVERA, MAR MERCADO & JOETEN STAFF



Nightly Mass is being held at 6:00pm at Santa Soledad Church in Kagman followed by the Rosary.

On the last day Thursday, November 12th, 2009, Mass will be celebrated at CHC Chapel at 8:00 a.m., followed by burial services at 10:00 a.m. at Tanapag Cemetery.

Please join us in prayers.

Thank You

Carrey's 'Christmas Carol' wraps up $31M weekend

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Jim Carrey's Scrooge collected holiday donations from movie fans with his new take on "A Christmas Carol," which took in $31 million to open as the weekend's top movie.

The Disney animated version of the Charles Dickens classic knocked the King of Pop out of the No. 1 spot as "Michael Jackson's This Is It" slipped to second place with $14 million, according to studio estimates Sunday.

Sony's "This Is It," presenting rehearsal performances Jackson shot before his death last June, raised its domestic total to $57.9 million. Worldwide, "This Is It" has taken in $186.5 million.

Featuring Carrey as Ebenezer Scrooge and also as the three holiday ghosts that show Scrooge the error of his miserly ways, "A Christmas Carol" came in on the low end of Disney's expectations for opening weekend.

On the other end of the spectrum, Lionsgate's acclaimed drama "Precious: Based on the Novel 'Push' by Sapphire" had a spectacular start, pulling in $1.8 million in just 18 theaters, averaging $100,000 a cinema. That compares with an $8,418 average for "A Christmas Carol" in 3,683 theaters.

"Precious" had a record average for films opening in 10 or more theaters. Others that have averaged $100,000 or more typically debut in only a few cinemas.

The weekend brought a rush of other new movies, led by George Clooney's comedy "The Men Who Stare at Goats," which finished at No. 3 with $13.3 million. The Overture Films release is a satiric look at U.S. military efforts to create "warrior monks" who can predict the future or walk through walls.

Debuting in fourth place with $12.5 million was Universal's "The Fourth Kind," starring Milla Jovovich as a psychologist studying alien abductions in Alaska.

Cameron Diaz and James Marsden's sci-fi tale "The Box" opened at No. 6 with $7.9 million. The Warner Bros. thriller centers on a couple given a mysterious box that can provide them $1 million, but at the cost of a stranger's life.

With nearly two months of playing time through the holidays, Disney is counting on steady business for "A Christmas Carol," particularly over Thanksgiving weekend and in the buildup to Christmas itself.

"You have to play these things for the long term," said Chuck Viane, Disney's head of distribution. "You've got to have the patience and you've got to pick the right weekend. For us, the days when the malls turned to Christmas stores is when we wanted to go."

AP

In this film publicity image released by Disney, from left, Belle, voiced by Robin Wright Penn, Ebenezer Scrooge, voiced by Jim Carrey and Fred, voiced by Colin Firth are shown in a scene from "A Christmas Carol."

Director Robert Zemeckis shot the movie using the same performance-capture technology used on his 2004 holiday offering "The Polar Express." Carrey and his co-stars acted on a bare soundstage as digital cameras caught their performances, with computer animators later adding costumes, sets, props and other effects.

"A Christmas Carol" came in ahead of "Polar Express," which had an opening weekend of $23.5 million. But it fell well short of the $55.1 million opening for Carrey's previous holiday tale, "Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas" in 2000.

Holiday-themed films tend to hold up well through the season, among them Disney's "The Santa Clause" comedies. After its modest start, "The Polar Express" went on to become a $160 million hit by the end of its run and has become a holiday perennial in rereleases in huge-screen IMAX theaters.

"A Christmas Carol" did three-fourths of its business in theaters showing 3-D versions. Huge-screen IMAX theaters, which represented only 5 percent of the theater count, accounted for $4.5 million, or 14.5 percent, of the movie's total gross, said Greg Foster, IMAX chairman and president.

1. **"A Christmas Carol,"** $31 million.
2. **"Michael Jackson's This Is It,"** $14 million.
3. **"The Men Who Stare at Goats,"** $13.3 million.
4. **"The Fourth Kind,"** $12.5 million.
5. **"Paranormal Activity,"** $8.6 million.
6. **"The Box,"** $7.9 million.
7. **"Couples Retreat,"** $6.4 million.
8. **"Law Abiding Citizen,"** $6.2 million.
9. **"Where the Wild Things Are,"** $4.2 million.
10. **"Astro Boy,"** $2.6 million.

"Precious," which won the top awards at last January's Sundance Film Festival, stars newcomer Gabourey Sidibe as a Harlem teen who gradually rises above an upbringing of incest, abuse and illiteracy.

After Sundance, Oprah Winfrey and Tyler Perry signed on as executive producers, helping to spread the word on "Precious," which has earned acclaim from critics and audiences at other film festivals. The film has Academy Awards buzz as a best-picture contender, along with Oscar prospects for Sidibe, co-star Mo'Nique and director Lee Daniels.

The movie started in only four cities—New York, Los Angeles, Atlanta and Chicago. Lionsgate plans to expand it this Friday to five more—Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., San Francisco, Dallas and Houston, then take it into wide release Nov. 20.

"A lot of movie-goers are not happy with the release plan right now, because it's not in their cities yet," said David Spitz, head of distribution for Lionsgate. "That's always a good sign."

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Hollywood.com. Final figures will be released Monday.

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A Christmas Carol
Friday 4:25 7:00 9:30
Saturday 1:25 4:25 7:00 9:30
Sunday 1:25 4:25 7:00
Mon thru Tues 4:25 7:00
Jim Carrey, Robin Wright Penn
Adventure, Fantasy • Rated PG

Synopsis
Ebenezer Scrooge begins the Christmas holiday with his usual miserly contempt, barking at his faithful clerk and his cheery nephew. But when the ghosts of Christmas Past, Present and Yet to Come take him on an eye-opening journey revealing truths Old Scrooge is reluctant to face, he must open his heart to undo years of ill will before it's too late.

The Men Who Stare at Goats
Friday 4:20 7:20 9:55
Saturday 1:30 4:20 7:20 9:55
Sunday 1:30 4:20 7:20
Mon thru Tues 4:20 7:20
George Clooney, Jeff Bridges
Thriller, Adaptation • Rated R

The Fourth Kind
Friday 4:05 7:10 9:50
Saturday 1:10 4:05 7:10 9:50
Sunday 1:10 4:05 7:10
Mon thru Tues 4:05 7:10
Milla Jovovich, Will Patton
Thriller • Rated PG 13

The Box
Friday 4:10 7:05 9:35
Saturday 1:05 4:10 7:05 9:35
Sunday 1:05 4:10 7:05
Mon thru Tues 4:10 7:05
Cameron Diaz, James Marsden
Thriller, Horror • Rated PG 13

Kimmy Dora
Friday 4:00 7:30 9:40
Saturday 1:20 4:00 7:30 9:40
Sunday 1:20 4:00 7:30
Mon thru Tues 4:00 7:30
Eugene Domingo, Dingdong Dantes
Musical, Documentary • Rated NR

★ ★ ★

Michael Jackson's This Is It
Friday 4:30 7:15 9:45
Saturday 1:00 4:30 7:15 9:45
Sunday 1:00 4:30 7:15
Mon thru Tues 4:30 7:15
Michael Jackson
Musical, Documentary • Rated PG

Synopsis
A rare glimpse into the final days of Michael Jackson, the documentary is compiled from an estimated 80 hours of rehearsal and behind-the-scenes footage of the legendary entertainer preparing for his 50 sold-out shows at London's O2 Arena that were scheduled to commence in July 2009 before his untimely death in June at age 50. Interviews with collaborators and close friends of the late performer are also featured.

Astro Boy
Friday 4:15
Saturday 1:15 4:15
Sunday 1:15 4:15
Mon thru Tues 4:15
Freddie Highmore, Nicolas Cage
Action, Comedy • Rated PG

Vampire's Assistant
Friday 7:25 10:00
Saturday 7:25 10:00
Sunday 7:25
Mon thru Tues 7:25
John C. Reilly, Chris Mssoglia
Adventure, Fantasy, Children • Rated PG 13

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Judge stops 2 Web sites from selling Beatles songs

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A federal judge has temporarily blocked two music-sharing Web sites from selling songs by The Beatles and other artists for 25 cents apiece.

U.S. District Judge John F. Walter on Thursday blocked the sites BlueBeat.com and Basebeat.com and owner Hank Risan from selling copyrighted songs by The Beatles and others. Music company EMI Group filed a federal lawsuit on Tuesday seeking an injunction against the sites, claiming they were engaging in music piracy.

EMI claims the Web sites have infringed on its copyrights to numerous artists' songs, including The Beach Boys, Coldplay and Lily Allen. Its complaint states BlueBeat.com and Basebeat.com were offering the recently released digitally remasters of The Beatles catalog for 25 cents per song; the box set of 13 albums retails for $250.

The Beatles songs have never been legally offered for sale online through sites such as iTunes or other music sharing services.

The Web site's attorney opposed EMI's injunction request, saying the sites are selling an altered version of the songs.

In an e-mail earlier this month to the Recording Industry Association of America's general counsel, Risan described the songs as a "psycho-acoustic simulation" rather than the original, copyrighted works.

Asked to explain the concept, Risan replied, "Psychoacoustic simulations are my synthetic creation of that series of sounds which best expresses the way I believe a particular melody should be heard as a live performance."

Neither site was online Friday, so it wasn't immediately clear what Risan meant.

The e-mail exchange is included as part of Risan's filings opposing the restraining order.

The label declined to comment on the ruling. A phone message left for Risan's attorney on Friday was not immediately returned.

Risan seems to be asserting a "fair use" defense to the works posted on his site, said Carole E. Handler, an intellectual property attorney and senior partner at the firm Wildman Harrold Allen & Dixon.

Handler noted fair use defenses have been claimed in several recent high-profile copyright fights, including the fight over publication of a book that was promoted as a sequel to J.D. Salinger's "The Catcher in the Rye." A judge blocked the book's publication in the United States because it too closely mirrors Salinger's classic without adequate parody or critique.

A fair use defense has been employed by artist Shepard Fairey, who is being sued by The Associated Press over the use of a wire service image as the basis for his famous poster of President Barack Obama titled "HOPE."

Courts generally evaluate whether a work is "transformative" before deciding whether fair use applies.

She said Walter must have felt that BlueBeat.com and Basebeat.com were infringing on EMI's copyrights to order an injunction.

"Intellectual property damage can mount so quickly," she said. "You can't put the genie back in the bottle after the damage is done.

Walter has scheduled a court hearing for Nov. 20 on whether to keep the injunction in place.

EMI is seeking a permanent injunction and a fine against Risan of up to $150,000 per song that was downloaded.

R&B singer Usher's divorce from his wife is final

ATLANTA (AP)—R&B singer Usher's divorce from his wife is final, according to court documents.

Fulton County Superior Court Judge Bensonetta Tipton Lane issued a final decree in the divorce case Wednesday.

Usher, 31, whose real name is Usher Raymond IV, filed for divorce from Tameka Raymond on June 12. He said the couple had been separated since July 2008 and claimed there was "no reasonable hope of reconciliation" and the marriage was "irretrievably broken."

Tameka Raymond disputed Usher's claim that the couple had been separated since July 2008. She said in court documents filed June 29 that she "had every reason to believe her marriage was intact" and that the two were "intimately together as husband and wife as recently as June 6."

Usher's lawyer, Ivory Brown, said Friday she couldn't comment on the case. BJ Bernstein, a lawyer for Tameka Raymond, did not immediately return a phone call seeking comment.

The couple have two young sons, Usher Raymond V, who will turn 2 on Nov. 26, and Naviyd Ely Raymond, who will be 1 on Dec. 11. When he filed for divorce, Usher was seeking joint custody of the boys. No custody arrangement was detailed in the divorce decree.

The couple married in August 2007 in a lavish ceremony. About 200 people attended their wedding at resort built in the style of a 16th-century-style French chateau on 3,500 hilly acres outside Atlanta.

Before the two married, Usher had a string of romances, most notably his three-year relationship with Chilli from the R&B group TLC. The Grammy-winning artist's hits include "Confessions," "Burn," "You Make Me Wanna" and "Yeah!"

White House to host episode of 'Iron Chef America'

NEW YORK (AP)—Michelle Obama's vegetable garden is about to become a culinary battlefield.

The Food Network announced Wednesday that an episode of "Iron Chef America" will be taped at the White House featuring Mario Batali, Bobby Flay and Emeril Lagasse.

The three chefs, joined by White House chef Cristeta Comerford, will be welcomed by the first lady and allowed to use anything found in the garden to help create their meals.

The competition will then move back to the network's Kitchen Stadium in New York, where Flay and Comerford will face-off against Batali and Lagasse to produce five dishes showcasing the ingredients.

The judges will include chef Nigella Lawson, Olympic gold medalist Natalie Coughlin, and actress Jane Seymour.

The episode airs Jan. 3.

AP

First lady Michelle Obama, left center, claps with children from Washington's Bancroft and Kimball Elementary Schools after their harvest of vegetables from the garden on the South Lawn of the White House in Washington, Thursday, Oct. 29, 2009.

Broderick focuses on 'Wonderful World'

FORT LAUDERDALE, Florida (AP)—Matthew Broderick says he's puzzled by the bashing he's received for his actions during the first New York preview of "The Starry Messenger," a new play by good friend Kenneth Lonergan.

"We had to rush to our first preview and then I guess we got some press just after one show, which I don't really understand," the actor says.

Messages posted on various theater Web sites said a prompter in the front row was needed to assist Broderick with his lines during the Oct. 26 performance of the three-hour play, produced by off-Broadway's New Group.

Broderick adds, "It's going very well now, I think, now that we've had a whole week. And it's going to be really good by the time it opens."

New Group artistic director Scott Elliott said "The Starry Messenger," the story of an astronomy teacher's affair with a younger woman, will open Nov. 23, a week later than originally planned.

For now, Broderick, who has appeared on stage in such hits as "Brighton Beach Memoirs" and "The Producers," has something else on which to focus—a new movie.

Honolulu Symphony cancels remaining 2009 concerts

HONOLULU (AP)—The Honolulu Symphony said Friday it's canceling concerts for the rest of the year and filing for bankruptcy, citing a big drop in donations.

The symphony, the oldest in the nation west of the Rocky Mountains, said it has $1 million in debt and doesn't have enough money to support operations into November and beyond.

The Honolulu Symphony Society's board of directors voted to file for Chapter 11 protection at a special meeting on Oct. 30. Papers will be submitted to court next week.

"We made payroll, even in this economy, through October. But when we reached toward the end of October, cash ran out and dried up," said Peter Shaindlin, the board's chairman.

Ticket sales have generally been OK, though weak at some recent events. Even so, ticket revenue covers only 30 percent of costs, and donations, which cover the remaining 70 percent, have dropped sharply during the recession.

"These are difficult economic times and everyone is doing whatever it takes to maintain the products and services they provide in our community while being economically prudent," executive director Majken Mechling said in a statement.

The 109-year-old body hopes to come back as a leaner and more efficient operation, but it's not clear when concerts will resume. The symphony is aiming for early next year, said spokeswoman Kristin Jackson said.

The symphony spends $4.1 million each year on payroll and benefits. Musician salaries account for the biggest single expense.

Mechling said the symphony can't continue to sustain a 64-piece orchestra, but she didn't say how many musicians the organization would have in the future.

ENTERTAINMENT TIDBITS

TV star Rachael Ray helps reeling Ohio town

WILMINGTON, Ohio (AP)—Television cooking star Rachael Ray is boosting the local food supply for a struggling Ohio town. On Saturday, Ray brought a Wilmington soup kitchen new appliances, shelves and furniture. Ray's show also promised to supply food for the kitchen for the next year. The soup kitchen is getting as many customers in a day as it did in a week a year ago. Wilmington is still reeling from the departure of DHL Express and other Wilmington Air Park operations, which has left a 15 percent local unemployment rate in its wake. On Sunday, the Food Network star hosted an early Thanksgiving feast for the community. The soup kitchen improvements and the Thanksgiving meal are scheduled to be featured on "The Rachael Ray Show" on Nov. 25.

HBO's 'Curb Your Enthusiasm' coming to basic cable

NEW YORK (AP)—TV Land and TV Guide Network say they are jointly acquiring basic cable rights to air "Curb Your Enthusiasm," the HBO comedy series produced by and starring "Seinfeld" co-creator Larry David. "Curb Your Enthusiasm" will come to TV Guide Network starting next February. TV Land expects to air the series as early as 2013, immediately following its run on TV Guide Network. Both networks also say they will acquire certain broadband, wireless and video-on-demand rights, bringing "Curb Your Enthusiasm" to multiple platforms. Pay-cable network HBO is currently premiering the seventh season of the series, which also stars Cheryl Hines, Jeff Garlin and Susie Essman.

Wife's male friend is too close for husband's comfort

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: My wife, "Paula," and I have a friend I'll call "Mark." I recently learned that before our wedding, Mark made a pass at Paula. (He was separated from his wife at the time.) Paula told him she wasn't interested.

I also found out that Paula kissed Mark while we were having some difficulties during the past couple of years. But when Mark and his wife worked things out, he told Paula the behavior had to end.

When I ask my wife about these things, she's honest and tells me what happened. I try to keep an open mind and get past it, but haven't been able to.

It doesn't help that Mark visits Paula at her job several times a week, and she stays there socializing with him after she's done working. I'd estimate they spend at least 10 hours a week together. I don't like to be around them anymore because they're always touching and poking each other. I actually counted 22 "touches" once when I was with them for a couple of hours.

I have told my wife I'm uncomfortable with their relationship, especially because of the past kissing business. She says I should stop being insecure and that they're just friends. I feel she is choosing their friendship over our marriage. Please help me figure out what to do.

LEFT OUT IN MAINE

DEAR LEFT OUT: Mark isn't your friend. And to say that Paula is insensitive to your feelings would be an understatement. What makes you uncomfortable is their obvious physical attraction, an example of which is the fact they can't keep their hands off each other.

Because you can't seem to get through to your wife, enlist the help of a licensed marriage counselor. Tell Paula you're making an appointment with a therapist and invite her along. If she refuses, go without her. What's happening is unfair to you, and you need an ally.

■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I am slightly overweight and want to lose 5 to 10 pounds. I admittedly have little self-control and always eat whatever is put in front of me.

My problem is my wife continues to stock cookies, ice cream and other goodies in the house. Even though I have asked her on many occasions to stop, she refuses to honor my requests. She says "the kids" shouldn't have to suffer because of my lack of self-control.

Abby, I'd like our kids to eat better, too. What should I do? I'd hate to split up over this issue because we have preteens and everything else is going well.

FRUSTRATED IN SAN DIEGO

DEAR FRUSTRATED: The print and television media have, for some time, been filled with stories about the importance of children learning healthy eating habits and urging parents to not only stock the fridge and pantry with healthy snacks, but also to set a good example. Your wife may have missed all of this, or she may have some ulterior motive for making sure you don't lose the weight.

Should this end an otherwise good marriage? No, but please understand that if you do not draw the line, your children may also wind up paying the price.

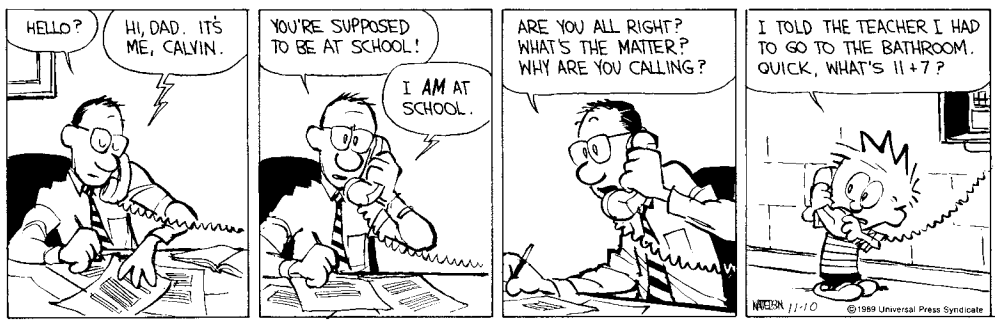
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable—and most frequently requested—poems and essays, send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


HELLO?
HI, DAD. IT'S ME, CALVIN.
YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE AT SCHOOL!
I AM AT SCHOOL.
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? WHAT'S THE MATTER? WHY ARE YOU CALLING?
I TOLD THE TEACHER I HAD TO GO TO THE BATHROOM. QUICK, WHAT'S 11+7?
11-10
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Garfield®

By Jim Davis

DR. WILSON...
YES?
YOUR BOYFRIEND'S IN THE WAITING ROOM WITH A BANJO
OH, NO
SHALL I GET THE TRANQUILIZER GUN?
JIM DAVIS 11-10
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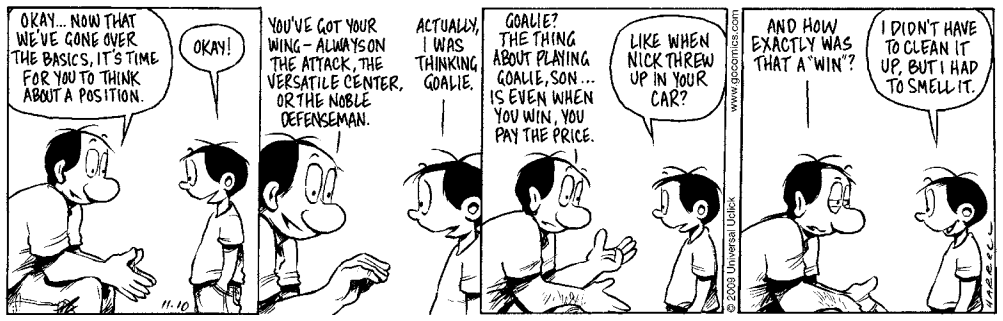
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


OKAY... NOW THAT WE'VE GONE OVER THE BASICS, IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO THINK ABOUT A POSITION.
OKAY!
YOU'VE GOT YOUR WING - ALWAYS ON THE ATTACK, THE VERSATILE CENTER, OR THE NOBLE DEFENSEMAN.
ACTUALLY, I WAS THINKING GOALIE.
GOALIE? THE THING ABOUT PLAYING GOALIE, SON... IS EVEN WHEN YOU WIN, YOU PAY THE PRICE.
LIKE WHEN NICK THREW UP IN YOUR CAR?
AND HOW EXACTLY WAS THAT A "WIN"?
I DIDN'T HAVE TO CLEAN IT UP, BUT I HAD TO SMELL IT.
11-10
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The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

YOU'RE OUT OF ORDER!! I OBJECT!!
MR. CAMINO. HOW MANY TIMES MUST WE GO OVER THIS?
YOU'RE ON THE JURY. YOU DON'T GET TO OBJECT.
NOW YOU'RE OUT OF ORDER!!
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11-10-09

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

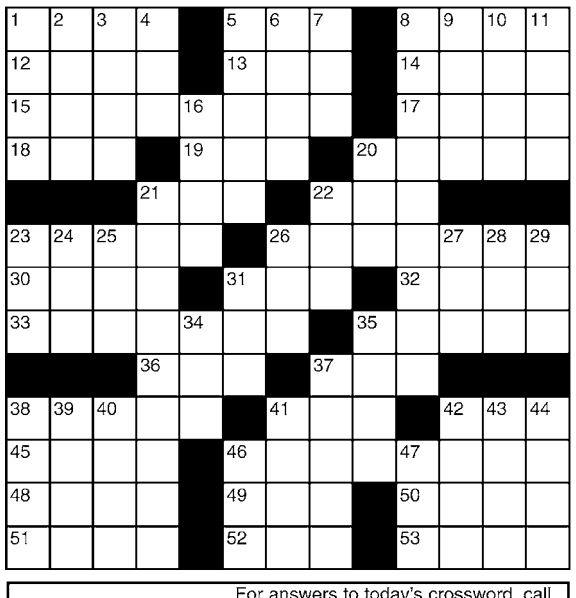
ACROSS
1 The third man
5 Sling contents
8 Commanded
12 Mrs. Dithers, in "Blondie"
13 Cattle call
14 Neighborhood
15 "I've Been Everywhere" singer
17 Penpoints
18 Before
19 That guy
20 Take to the rink
21 Bill's partner
22 Autumn mo.
23 Accustom
26 Virginia crop
30 Couch
31 Mandible
32 "Once — a time, ..."
33 Having tines
35 Dish
36 "Krazy —"
37 Collection
38 Spingarn Medal org.
41 See 29-Down
42 Sch. grp.
45 Earthen pot
46 Bread-and-butter note's message
48 Beavers' structures
49 Pick a target
50 Press
51 Being, to Brutus
52 Recipe meas.
53 Fender flaw

DOWN
1 Be sore
2 Sow's mister
3 Sea eagle
4 "Mighty — a Rose"
5 Task for an OB/GYN
6 Leeway
7 Do some yardwork
8 Safe place for lots of money
9 Operatic solo
10 Credit card aftermath
11 Relaxation
16 Old woman's home?
20 Weep loudly
21 Shaft's housing
22 Present
23 Kreskin's claim
24 "— iron bars a cage"
25 Venusian vessel?
26 Slight amount
27 Bookkeeper (Abbr.)
28 Barracks bed
29 With 41-Across, boxing ploy
31 Lustrous black
34 Space
35 Laborer
37 Morass
38 Protuberance
39 "Woe is me!"
40 Charitable donation
41 Anything but that
42 Combustible heap
43 Roger Rabbit, e.g.
44 Family member
46 Make lace
47 Tease

Solution time: 21 mins.

O	R	E			O	T	T		C	A	L	F
D	E	L	I		F	E	E		O	R	E	O
D	I	S	C		F	A	X		E	M	I	R
S	N	E	E	R		K	A	H	N			
			C	A	B		S	U	B	T	L	E
C	A	R	R	Y	O	N		G	R	O	A	N
A	L	O	E		W	E	B		O	U	Z	O
I	S	A	A	C		W	A	S	T	R	E	L
N	O	R	M	A	L		D	O	H			
			C	R	A	B		N	E	R	V	E
J	U	D	O		D	E	N		R	U	E	S
A	K	I	N		L	E	O		S	N	I	P
G	E	N	E		E	R	R			E	L	Y

Yesterday's answer 11-10



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Chris Joannou, 30; Mackenzie Phillips, 50; Sinbad, 53; Donna Fargo, 64

Happy Birthday: Don't give in to what others want when it doesn't suit your own agenda. Offer suggestions and alternatives but not your time or your money. You've been paving the way for others for too long and now it's your turn to make headway. Don't let anyone's demands or ultimatums stand in your way. Your numbers are 3, 11, 13, 19, 23, 31, 42

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Consider how much more control you will have if you are in business for yourself. Work, money and doing your own thing will bring you the satisfaction you are looking for. It's time you put your ideas into play. ✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Take part in an activity that includes the young and the old but, most of all, the people you enjoy spending time with. You will learn a lot about yourself by interacting with people who are creative, outgoing and knowledgeable. ✪✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): You face a no-win situation. It will be impossible to pacify the people you live or work with if you give in to the demands being made. You will make progress if you stick to the rules and focus on what needs doing. ✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Ask your friends what they think of your current situation. Their advice will shine a light on what you must do to make things better. Times are changing and the faster you get with the program and move forward, the better off you'll be. ✪✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Expect to have to answer questions and deal with other people's problems. By doing so with finesse and expertise, you will win the respect of your peers. The faster you act, the better. Someone will recognize your talent. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Time is money and, if you let your personal problems slow you down, you aren't likely to make financial gains. Observe what others are doing before making a decision that could cause emotional setbacks. ✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Avoid trouble by staying out of the way and getting what's expected of you finished. Someone in a superior position to you will be looking for a scapegoat. You aren't likely to get a fair shake if you aren't prepared to prove you have fulfilled your responsibilities. ✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Promote and present what you have to offer. You are bound to get some great suggestions and support from individuals with something to offer. Your expertise and creative abilities will spark all sorts of new possibilities. ✪✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): You aren't going to get your own way, regardless of what you do or say. Family talks will not help you resolve a problem. Back off and allow everyone to follow his or her own path. Mixing business with pleasure will result in disappointment and a change of heart. ✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): You can establish yourself by taking part in an industry or community event that brings you in contact with potential partners or employers. As long as you maintain control, you can turn whatever you are working on into a moneymaking venture. ✪✪✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Investments, winnings, money owing, surrenders and rebates are all a possibility. Legal matters, contracts or a settlement can all be moved closer to an agreement. Do not let anyone take advantage of you. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Your lack of understanding will hurt a relationship. By being accommodating, you can end up with far more. Take the time and make the effort to find solutions and satisfy everyone's needs. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are charming and creative and lean toward the unusual. You are dedicated to standing up for your rights and beliefs.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations,* ***myspace.com/eugenialast*** *for Eugenia's blog,* ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

		5		1				
			7	5		3		
	6	9	4			1		8
						9	3	
2	9			8			4	5
	1	3						
3		4			1	8	6	
		7		9	4			
				6		2		

Difficulty Level ★★ 11/10

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Saturday's SUDOKU Answer

3	9	4	5	1	7	8	6	2
7	1	5	6	8	2	9	4	3
6	2	8	4	9	3	1	7	5
1	4	6	2	5	9	7	3	8
5	7	3	1	6	8	2	9	4
9	8	2	7	3	4	5	1	6
4	6	1	8	7	5	3	2	9
2	5	9	3	4	1	6	8	7
8	3	7	9	2	6	4	5	1

Difficulty Level ★ 11/09

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

THE NEW AGE **Solution: 7 letters**

E	L	N	O	I	T	A	T	I	D	E	M	V	E	A
M	A	S	O	E	Y	G	R	E	N	E	E	P	T	G
O	I	R	P	O	R	S	Y	I	C	G	T	E	A	O
H	C	M	T	I	M	U	C	I	E	N	A	R	L	Y
O	O	U	O	H	H	I	T	T	(M)	E	P	U	T	G
R	S	S	U	V	D	S	A	A	(I)	H	H	T	E	O
O	O	I	R	E	I	R	N	C	(N)	E	Y	A	R	L
S	U	C	M	L	I	E	A	O	(D)	N	S	R	N	O
C	L	E	O	A	C	I	S	H	I	O	I	E	A	X
O	O	H	N	I	D	E	A	L	S	T	C	T	T	E
P	H	I	L	O	G	I	D	N	I	S	A	I	I	L
E	S	E	Z	I	N	R	E	D	O	M	L	L	V	F
M	L	A	T	N	E	M	N	O	R	I	V	N	E	E
G	E	N	E	R	A	T	I	O	N	S	F	A	I	R
I	L	A	V	I	T	S	E	F	E	I	L	E	B	C

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Treasury 5 or 7 Send check or money order for $10.95 each plus $3.25 postage and handling each ($14.20 total each, U.S. funds only) for the first volume, $1.50 p&h for each additional volume, to Universal Uclick, Attn: Wonderword, 1130 Walnut St., Kansas City, Mo. 64106 or call toll-free, 1-800-642-6480 Order online at upuzzles.com.

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WHATZIT Solution: Kiss and make up

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Pro Se

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

In the Matter of the Petition for the Change of Name of:	FCD CN Civil Action No. 09-0549
KATHRYN JIN RI, Minor Child, By: HUA JIN, Petitioner.	NOTICE OF HEARING

Notice is hereby given that the above-entitled matter is set for hearing on November 23, 2009, at 1:30 p.m. in Courtroom 205A, before Associate Judge Govendo.

Dated this 28th day of September, 2009.

/s/ Bernadita Sablan
Clerk of Court

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10.001	Laboratory Specialist (Chemist), Water Lab, Saipan 1 Position	$25,296.00 – $32,885.00	11/03/09 - 11/18/09
JVA No.	Position	Compensation (per annum)	Open/Close Date
10.002	Drinking Water and Wastewater Division Manager 1 Position	$60,000.00 – $70,000.00	11/05/09 - 11/19/09

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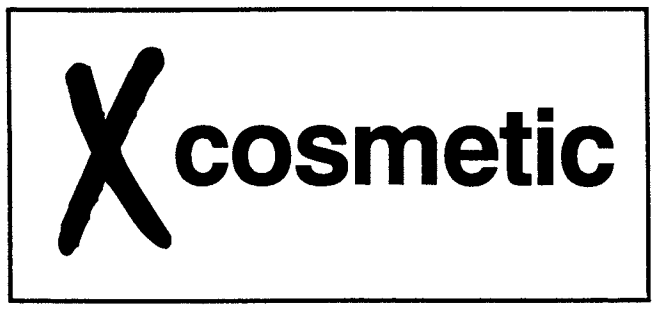
Find the familiar phrase, saying or name in this arrangement of letters.



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Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 7-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as $25 per 3 liner ad for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of below packages that fits your budget.

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• 5-Liner	$35
• 3-Liner with picture	$45
• 5-Liner with picture	$55

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Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday Issue:
- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

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All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

Romo, Cowboys topple Eagles, 20-16

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Miles Austin punctuated his touchdown catch by emphatically firing the ball into the stands.

Take that, Philadelphia.

Tony Romo threw a 49-yard TD pass to Austin midway through the fourth quarter and the Dallas Cowboys beat the Eagles 20-16 Sunday night in the 100th meeting between the division rivals.

On the final day of the 2008 regular season, the Eagles dominated Dallas 44-6 in a do-or-die game for both teams. Philadelphia earned a wild-card berth with that victory, won two playoff contests on the road and advanced to the NFC championship game, losing at Arizona.

The Cowboys (6-2) spent the whole offseason thinking about that horrendous ending. They got their revenge and took over sole possession of first place in the NFC East with their fourth straight victory.

"Our last loss against them really motivated us to come out and play good," Cowboys linebacker DeMarcus Ware said.

The Eagles fell to 5-3 and the New York Giants are 5-4 after a 5-0 start.

Romo finished 21 of 34 for 307 yards, one TD and one interception.

"We executed," Romo said. "I think the coaches put together a good plan. You just have to keep fighting and getting better."

Donovan McNabb was shaky after a strong performance in a 40-17 rout of the Giants last week. McNabb threw for 227 yards, one TD and was intercepted twice for the first time this season.

"We have to eliminate mistakes," McNabb said.

The Cowboys began their go-ahead drive after stopping McNabb on fourth-and-inches at their 45. The Eagles challenged, but a replay upheld the original spot.

On third-and-14, Romo fooled Sheldon Brown with a pump-fake and hit a wide-open Austin down the left sideline to give Dallas a 20-13 lead.

"I gave them a little pump," Romo said. "I thought they'd been jumping it a little and they went for it."

Austin leads the Cowboys with seven TD catches, three fewer than Terrell Owens had last season. Unlike T.O., Austin only gives defenses headaches instead of his QB.

"I made sure I caught it first," Austin said of his only reception in the game. "A bunch of the guys were making fun of me because I took so long to see it in my hands."

David Akers kicked a 52-yard field goal to cut it to 20-16, but the Eagles never got the ball back. The Cowboys maintained possession the final 4:27.

"I thought we could hold them, get the ball back and win the game," Eagles coach Andy Reid said.

Trailing 10-6, the Eagles seemingly went ahead when Ellis Hobbs returned the second-half kickoff 96 yards for a score. But a holding call on Moise Fokou nullified the TD.

No matter, McNabb drove Philadelphia 77 yards for the go-ahead score.

LeSean McCoy turned a short pass into a 45-yard gain. One play later, McNabb escaped the rush and found Brent Celek in the corner of the end zone to put Philadelphia ahead 13-10.

On Dallas' ensuing possession, Brown intercepted Romo's off-target pass to Jason Witten and returned it 54 yards. An illegal block by Fokou negated the return to the Cowboys 35, and the Eagles' drive stalled near midfield after starting at their 12.

Mike Jenkins intercepted McNabb to set up Nick Folk's tying 33-yard field goal 8 seconds into the fourth quarter.

Gerald Sensabaugh's interception on Philadelphia's first possession ended McNabb's streak of 118 straight passes without a pick. McNabb's pass on third-and-5 to a wide-open Jeremy Maclin hit him in the hands and bounced to Sensabaugh.

Six plays later, Tashard Choice ran in from the 2 after taking a shotgun snap with Romo lined up wide to the right. Romo completed two third-down passes to keep the drive going, including a 21-yard gain to Kevin Ogletree on third-and-9.

Romo tossed a 64-yard catch-and-run pass to Patrick Crayton late in the second quarter to set up Folk's 22-yard field goal that made it 10-6. Tracy White made a diving, TD-saving tackle to trip up Crayton.

Akers kicked a 45-yard field goal early in the second quarter to put the Eagles on the board. He nailed a 48-yarder late in the quarter to cut it to 7-6.

AP

Dallas Cowboys wide receiver Miles Austin, right, pulls in a 49-yard touchdown pass as Philadelphia Eagles safety Sean Jones defends in the second half of an NFL football game, Sunday, Nov. 8, 2009, in Philadelphia.

Buccaneers 38, Packers 28

At Tampa Bay, rookie Josh Freeman passed for 205 yards and three touchdowns to lead the previously winless Bucs to a victory over the Green Bay Packers.

In his first pro start, Freeman completed 14 of 31 passes with just one interception. A critical second pick was wiped out by a Green Bay penalty during the go-ahead drive.

The Bucs were the last team in the NFL to win this season. It was also the first victory for the league's youngest head coach, 33-year-old Raheem Morris, who replaced Jon Gruden after Tampa Bay went 0-4 in December and missed the playoffs last year.

Aaron Rodgers threw for 266 yards and two touchdowns for the Packers, who have won four and lost four. He also threw three interceptions and had one returned for a TD that put the game out of reach in the final minute.

Colts 20, Texans 17

At Indianapolis, running back Joseph Addai scored the go-ahead touchdown with 7:11 left and Houston's Kris Brown missed a 42-yard field goal as time expired, keeping Indianapolis undefeated.

Indy is the fourth team in league history with 17 straight wins. New England has done it twice and Chicago did it in 1933-34. Jim Caldwell became the first rookie coach to go 8-0 since Potsy Clark in 1930.

Indianapolis blew a 13-0 first-half lead and trailed 17-13 when Steve Slaton opened the fourth quarter with a 1-yard TD run. But Addai answered with a 2-yard TD run to rally the Colts.

Peyton Manning also became the first quarterback in league history to throw for 40,000 yards within a decade.

Saints 30, Panthers 20

At New Orleans, the Saints won their first eight matches for the first time in club history when Drew Brees overcame two early turnovers to pass for 330 yards and a touchdown.

DeAngelo Williams rushed for 149 yards and two TDs, and Carolina gained 182 on the ground. However, it was Williams' fumble at his 1 with just more than 2 minutes left that led to New Orleans' clinching TD after coming back from 17-3 down.

Chargers 21, Giants 20

At East Rutherford, Philip Rivers capped an 80-yard drive with an 18-yard pass to Vincent Jackson with 21 seconds to play as the Chargers handed New York its fourth straight loss.

Rivers was 24 of 36 for 209 yards and three touchdowns, including two to Jackson, in helping San Diego win its third straight.

Titans 34, 49ers 27

At San Francisco, six plays after his 81-yard touchdown run was overturned, Chris Johnson took a pitch from Vince Young and ran 2 yards for a go-ahead score.

Johnson converted on fourth-and-inches for his TD, making up for those six points negated only a few minutes earlier after video replay determined he stepped out of bounds on the long run. Johnson ran for 135 yards and has 959 halfway through the season.

Stunned San Francisco has lost four straight following a 3-1 start.

Patriots 27, Dolphins 17

At Foxborough, Randy Moss set up the Patriots' first touchdown with a one-handed, 36-yard grab at the Dolphins 1-yard line, then scored on a 71-yard play after catching the ball about 10 yards beyond the line of scrimmage.

Miami's two touchdowns came on possessions on which it used the wildcat most extensively—after gaining just 36 yards on 21 wildcat plays in its previous two games. But New England's quick-strike ability took back the momentum.

Moss caught six passes for 147 yards, while Tom Brady went 25 for 37 for 332 yards, his third straight game with more than 300 yards and team-record 27th of his career.

Bengals 17, Ravens 7

At Cincinnati, the Bengals scored on their first three possessions, then spent the rest of the time chasing Baltimore's Joe Flacco around the field.

Cardinals 41, Bears 21

At Chicago, one week after throwing five interceptions, Kurt Warner tied a career high by throwing five touchdown passes. Larry Fitzgerald added 123 yards receiving and two touchdowns.

Warner was at his best after a miserable performance in a 34-21 loss to Carolina. He handled a team that had a chance to sign him as a backup four years ago, matching the record for TD passes by a Bears opponent without getting picked off.

Warner completed 23 of 32 for 261 yards and threw touchdown passes on the first four possessions. Neil Rackers added field goals on the next two, sending Arizona to an easy win and Chicago to a damaging loss.

Falcons 31, Redskins 17

At Atlanta, Michael Turner ran for a season-high 166 yards, breaking away from former Falcons CB DeAngelo Hall on a 58-yard touchdown that finished off Washington early in the fourth quarter.

Jaguars 24, Chiefs 21

At Jacksonville, David Garrard threw for 264 yards, including a 61-yard touchdown to Mike Sims-Walker.

Seahawks 32, Lions 20

At Seattle, Matt Hasselbeck rallied the Seahawks from a 17-0 deficit with a franchise-record 39 completions as Seattle avoided the embarrassment of being the first home team to lose to the Lions in 25 months.

Skins' Hall plans to file complaint with Goodell

ATLANTA (AP)—Redskins cornerback DeAngelo Hall says Atlanta coach Mike Smith cursed at him and a Falcons assistant tried to "get some licks in" during a sideline melee Sunday.

Hall said he plans to file a complaint with NFL commissioner Roger Goodell that Smith "cussed me out" and Falcons director of athletic performance Jeff Fish and others "put their hands on me."

Hall said he was trying to pull teammate LaRon Landry away from the Atlanta sideline after Landry was called for a late hit on Falcons quarterback Matt Ryan. Hall and Landry immediately were surrounded by Falcons players and staff members.

Other Washington players joined in, but much of the attention was on Hall, the former Falcons player who had talked all week of being bitter at the way he was treated when traded after the 2007 season. He played in Atlanta for four years and made the Pro Bowl twice.

Hall said he was trying to get away from Fish and others.

"After that, coach Smith came over to me, talking (expletive) to me, saying they were going to kick my (butt)," Hall said. "I stay in Atlanta during the offseason, so if Mike Smith wants to see me, he can definitely find me."

When asked about Hall's role in the pushing and shoving, Smith said, "There were a bunch of guys on that sideline. Some of them were wearing black helmets and some of them were wearing maroon helmets. I can't tell you anything more about it."

When asked again if he knew Hall was involved, Smith said, "I can't tell you who was on that sideline.

"Our quarterback was hit late and there was a skirmish over there. All I was trying to do was restore order to the sideline and did not want to get into a situation where any of our guys were injured. That was my view of it. Again, it happened very, very quickly."

Hall said he plans to take his complaints to the league.

"I'm going to get on the horn with commissioner Goodell and we're going to figure out a way how to nip this in the bud," Hall said. "It's different with me coming in trying to break stuff up and as a strength coach, if you coming at me and you're trying to get licks, that ain't how you do things.

"They need to have some repercussions and something needs to happen to them, too."

Ryan had just stepped out of bounds when Landry delivered a blow to the quarterback's back late in the second quarter of the Falcons' 31-17 win. As penalty flags flew, Hall jumped into the middle of things.

Redskins coach Jim Zorn said he thought the melee was controlled.

"I thought everybody kept it together," Zorn said. "I thought the officials handled it very well. I was watching on the big screen and I knew that DeAngelo was over there and I knew that was a bad place for him to be so I tried to get over there and help the situation. But even DeAngelo coming back to me, he had a real sense of control about the situation, too."

Suns slow to shine in daytime, beat Wizards

WASHINGTON (AP)—JasonRichardson scored 22 points and Steve Nash had 17 assists as the Phoenix Suns maintained their dominance of the Washington Wizards with a 102-90 victory Sunday.

The Suns never trailed in the second half as they beat the Wizards for the sixth straight time. Washington last defeated Phoenix nearly three years ago.

Phoenix improved to six wins and a loss, matching the best seven-game start in franchise history. The Wizards have lost four straight.

AP

Phoenix Suns forward Amare Stoudemire, top, pulls Washington Wizards center Andray Blatche's jersey during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Sunday, Nov. 8, 2009, in Washington.

Pistons 88, 76ers 81

At Auburn Hills, Ben Gordon scored 23 points and Ben Wallace added 16 rebounds for the Pistons, who held Philadelphia without a field goal for the last six minutes.

Wallace had seven of Detroit's 21 offensive rebounds, and added three blocks and three steals. Charlie Villanueva added 16 points.

Andre Iguodala led Philadelphia with 24 points.

Thunder 102, Magic 74

At Oklahoma City, Kevin Durant scored 28 points, Russell Westbrook added 17 points and 10 assists as the Thunder took it away from the Magic.

Orlando played for the fourth time this season without Vince Carter and Rashard Lewis, and also added Ryan Anderson to the injured list. The Magic seemed to run out of gas after a strong start.

Oklahoma City scored the first eight points after half time, and then added a 9-0 spurt shortly thereafter to push its lead to 72-49 on Nick Collison's basket in the lane midway through the third period.

Dwight Howard led the Magic with 20 points.

Lakers 104, Hornets 88

At Los Angeles, Kobe Bryant scored 28 points, Shannon Brown added 15 and the Lakers thrived again without their top two big men.

DJ Mbenga had 10 points and 12 rebounds for the defending NBA champions, who easily won their fifth straight game and their second in a row without injured center Andrew Bynum and forward Pau Gasol.

Bryant scored all but two of his points before halftime, repeatedly capitalizing down low with ease against Devin Brown's defense. Los Angeles opened a 27-point lead in the third quarter.

Chris Paul had 15 points and nine assists for the inaccurate Hornets, who opened a three-game West Coast road trip with their fourth loss in five games.

Trail Blazers 116, Timberwolves 93

At Portland, Andre Miller scored 21 points, and LaMarcus Aldridge and Travis Outlaw each had 19 as Portland built a big first-half lead and beat Minnesota.

Miller, acquired last summer by Portland, scored 12 points during the third quarter. Aldridge, who had only 12 free throw attempts during the Trail Blazers' first six games, was 9-for-9, and also grabbed 10 rebounds. Outlaw scored 12 of his 19 points during the second half.

Portland moved to within a game of first-place Denver in the Pacific Division. Minnesota dropped its sixth consecutive game after winning its season-opener.

Kings 120, Warriors 107

At Sacramento, rookie Tyreke Evans scored 18 of his 23 points in the second quarter and the Kings beat Golden State to win back-to-back games for the first time in a year.

Beno Udrih added 20 points and six assists for the Kings.

Stephen Jackson scored 21 points and Corey Maggette added 20 for the Warriors. Kelenna Azubuike had 13 points, Anthony Randolph had 14 and Anthony Morrow 11. Warriors leading scorer Monta Ellis made just 4-of-11 shots and scored nine points.

Jason Thompson had 19 points and 10 rebounds and Donte Greene added 17 points for Sacramento.

Unhappy Iverson leaves Grizzlies 'indefinitely'

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Disgruntled Memphis guard Allen Iverson returned to his home in Atlanta after receiving permission to leave the team to attend to personal business.

Team owner Michael Heisley gave the four-time NBA scoring leader permission to skip the Grizzlies' game Saturday night against the Los Angeles Clippers following a 114-98 loss to the Lakers the night before.

According to a team spokesman, Iverson participated in a walkthrough at the team's hotel in the morning and then hopped a flight in the afternoon after he and personal manager Gary Moore met with Heisley.

Iverson has played in three games since returning from a hamstring injury, averaging 12.3 points, 3.7 assists and 22.3 minutes. Coach Lionel Hollins spoke to him briefly before he left, but would not elaborate on the conversation.

"It's a personal issue that they asked for permission to go attend to," Hollins said. "It was granted, and it's indefinite. I have no other information."

Iverson played 21 minutes against the Lakers, making two of five shots and finishing with eight points and three assists. In the postgame dressing room, the 10-time All-Star reiterated his displeasure about coming off the bench for the first time in his 14-year career.

"It's something that I never did in my life, so obviously it's a big adjustment," he said. "I'm so tired of discussing that, talking about that, every single day. It's just not something that I want to discuss. That's something you've got to ask the coach. He makes all the decisions around here. Obviously, they signed me for a reason. They've been watching me play this game for 13 years, and they know what I do on the basketball court."

Iverson also acknowledged that he had become a distraction.

"When I hear anything about the Memphis Grizzlies, I don't hear you guys talk about anything other than the situation with me coming off the bench," he said Friday. "I mean, there's got to be something else with this team to talk about besides that. But I guess that sells a lot better than anything else when it comes to this team."

The worst part of his situation, Iverson said, was that he and Hollins have not discussed the situation in private.

"That's probably why it's at this point right now," Iverson said. "It's probably going to always be hard for me and him to see eye-to-eye, because we've never even talked to each other. Obviously that's what you do if you're trying to accomplish the same goal."

When asked before Saturday's game to respond, Hollins bluntly: "If Allen wants to talk to me, my door is open. I talk to him during the game before the game and after the game.

"I understand star power, and that's to be expected," Hollins added. "I wouldn't mind even talking about Allen's star power if it was about the game and his performance during the game, versus what Allen has said and what he will or won't do."

The Grizzlies used Marcus Williams as the backup point guard against the Clippers.

"It's the way we'd been going since training camp, until the last three games," Hollins said.

Asked if he had any timetable as to when Iverson might start for the Grizzlies, Hollins said: "I have no comment about that."

Agassi's book reveals lies he 'can't live with'

By HOWARD FENDRICH
AP TENNIS WRITER

It turns out Andre Agassi was lying all along.

To fans. To opponents. To tennis authorities. To first wife Brooke Shields. To friends, including Barbra Streisand. To the media. And, he says, to himself.

"I can't live with that anymore," Agassi said in a telephone interview with The Associated Press.

"These lies—some of them came, certainly, out of fear. A lot of them came out of real confusion. A lot of it was thinking out loud. A lot of it was just getting stuff wrong. And a lot of it started with lies to myself," Agassi said. "When I retired from tennis, I had the opportunity, the time, the energy, to turn a real hard lens on myself."

His book "Open," in stores Monday, allows Agassi to unburden himself of secrets he's carried for years. Secrets about using crystal meth, about evading punishment for a failed drug test, about wearing a hairpiece, about what he calls a long-standing hatred of tennis.

Agassi described the memoir, a compelling read crafted by Pulitzer Prize winner J.R. Moehringer from tape recordings of the eight-time Grand Slam champion's taped recollections, as part of his "atonement for where I've been in my life."

As he retraces that life in present tense—and without quotation marks, because "this is reconstructed dialogue," as he put it—Agassi sets out to explain himself and describe his journey from ninth-grade dropout to founder of a prep school in Las Vegas. He writes about his courtship of tennis star Steffi Graf, now his wife and the mother of their two children.

Along the way, he offers critical words for rivals such as Pete Sampras, Michael Chang and Boris Becker; discusses "tanking" matches; and poignantly describes his childhood fear of his father ("shrill and stern and filled with rage"), who Agassi told the AP refused to read the book.

Agassi recounts how, when he was a kid, his father would give him Excedrin before matches because it contained caffeine. Once, Agassi writes, his father gave him what Agassi believes to be speed. He also writes at various points about using marijuana and alcohol. Speaking to the AP, Agassi called crystal meth "a performance inhibitor" and said, "Everything I earned on the tennis court, I actually had to probably earn more than I needed to, because of many of the things I did to myself."

Asked whether he ever took performance-enhancing substances as a professional, Agassi—who retired in 2006—replied, with a light chuckle, "No. No. The answer is 'No.'"

He is not surprised by the negative reactions to some of the book's revelations. Martina Navratilova, for example, likened Agassi to baseball's Roger Clemens; Roger Federer referred to material in the book as "a bit of a pity."

Agassi understands such responses, he told the AP, because, "You've got to remember: I spent many years angry and disappointed at myself."

He said he simply felt compelled to confess to using crystal meth "a lot" in 1997, failing a doping test that year, lying to the men's tennis tour about how the drug entered his system and avoiding punishment.

"How can you tell people to not hide from truth when you hide from it?" Agassi said in the interview. "While I know this story cuts against the grain of one's perceptions of me, it is the true me. And I believe in that authenticity."

He added: "I have no regrets about what's in there."

There are plenty of fascinating passages, aside from the excerpts sold to magazines and newspapers as part of the publicity push to help sell books. Agassi used the word "sensationalized" repeatedly during the 20-minute interview to describe those excerpts.

He hopes people will read the entire book so they can appreciate what he called its "power."

"It's about me learning how to commit fully, despite the fear of failure," he said. "It's a person waking up in a life that they didn't choose, in a life that they maybe don't want, and not being sure how to take ownership of their own life, and figuring that out."

The book also is about tennis:

■ On Sampras: Agassi says Sampras "sounds more robotic than" a parrot. At his depths, Agassi thinks: "I envy Pete's dullness. I wish I could emulate his spectacular lack of inspiration, and his peculiar lack of need for inspiration." Agassi tells of betting coach Brad Gilbert about how much Sampras tipped a parking valet; they ask the valet, who says $1; Agassi's conclusion: "We could not be more different, Pete and I."

■ On Chang: "He thanks God—credits God—for the win, which offends me. That God should take sides in a tennis match, that God should side against me, that God should be in Chang's box, feels ludicrous and insulting. I beat Chang and savor every blasphemous stroke." When Chang wins the 1989 French Open, Agassi thinks, "I feel sickened. How could Chang, of all people, have won a slam before me?"

■ On other opponents: Agassi writes about holding grudges against Becker (who Agassi says blew kisses at Shields during a match), Jim Courier, Thomas Muster, Yevgeni Kafelnikov, Jeff Tarango (who Agassi says cheated during a match between them when Agassi was 8).

■ On "tanking": Agassi says he lost on purpose against Chang in the Australian Open semifinals one year so he wouldn't have to face Becker in the final, writing: "It's almost harder than winning. You have to lose in such a way that the crowd can't tell." He also says of sports writers: "They never get it right. When I tank, they say I'm not good enough; when I'm not good enough, they say I tank."

■ On his fake hair: Of the 1990 French Open final, Agassi writes, "Warming up before the match, I pray. Not for a win, but for my hairpiece to stay on."

■ On the 1999 French Open final, which he won to complete a career Grand Slam: "I've already obsessed about this tournament for the last ten years. I can't bear the idea of obsessing about it for another eighty. ... If I don't win this thing right now, I'll never be happy, truly happy, again."

2010 Festival of Runs set for March 6

Organizers of the annual Festival of Runs have announced March 6 as the date for next year's event.

The annual signature event of the Marianas Visitors Authority attracts international competitors from Japan, China, and other countries with its combination full marathon, half marathon, and 10-kilometer course.

In consultation with local hotels and other travel partners, the MVA has moved the event—normally held in the peak visitor season of January—to March in order to boost visitor arrivals during that period.

"In 2010 we will be implementing a number of changes for the Festival of Runs to improve the event, especially on the coordination and execution side for competitors," said MVA managing director Perry Tenorio. "We were very happy with last year's record turnout of over 400 runners, and we are always looking for ways to make the event even more attractive to potential visitors."

In addition to the new date, registration has already begun to ensure racers have ample time to meet the Feb. 25, 2010, registration deadline. Registration by Feb. 5, 2010, is $55 for the full marathon and $45 for the half marathon and 10-km run. Registration after Feb. 5 is $65 for the full marathon and $55 for the half marathon and 10k.

"With all the new features we've added for competitors since the event's inception, including the popular prerace carbo-loading dinner and the electronic timing system, the Feb. 25 deadline will allow us ample time to make sure everything is set and ready to run seamlessly," said Tenorio. "We look forward to another great event in March 2010."

Orientation for all participants is mandatory and will be held at 4pm on March 5 at American Memorial Park Amphitheater. The awards banquet will be held on race day.

The age divisions are 14 and under, 15-19, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59 and 60 plus. Prizes will be given for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place in each category. Raffle drawings for prizes will also be held at the banquet. All runners will receive a finisher's T-shirt after the event.

To register, contact Ed Diaz of the MVA at 664-3200/1 or e-mail ediaz@mymarianas.com.

Major sponsors are the MVA, DFS Galleria, Delta Airlines, Oakley, and Northern Mariana Athletics. Supporting entities are the Division of Parks and Recreation, the Dept. of Public Safety, Commonwealth Health Center, Hawaiian Rock Products, and American Memorial Park. ***(PR)***

Pacquiao: Weighty worry hounds Cotto

Pinoy superstar believes Puerto Rican is dieting

HOLLYWOOD—Going by Miguel Cotto's website updates, you'd think that the Puerto Rican boxing star is running a very relaxed camp.

Manny Pacquiao isn't convinced, though.

The pound-for-pound king, who has been jovial and worry-free for several training days now, thinks Cotto is still shedding off pounds with about eight days to go before their Nov. 14 fight at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas.

"I think he's dieting," said Pacquiao.

Several foreign journalists who saw Cotto during his press preview Tuesday think he's even crash-dieting.

In contrast, Pacquiao is enjoying the benefits of fighting in a heavier weight—he gets to eat more.

"Because of my training, I need to eat," Pacquiao told reporters after five more rounds of sparring at the Wild Card gym. "We're making sure that I don't go under the weight."

The Filipino icon is expected to start tapering off from his beastly regimen as he prepares to leave for Las Vegas in two days' time.

Pacquiao normally weighs at 149 pounds, but his weight easily goes down to 146 after training.

He sparred against Urbano Antillon and Ray Beltran on Saturday, before heading off to an engagement. He was delayed a few minutes because of crowd issues at the Wild Card parking area, but the Los Angeles Police Department sent squad cars to solve the problem.

The crowd was eventually dispersed in about an hour.

Cotto, meanwhile, in his last two posts on his Twitter account, said he has little worries going into the homestretch of his camp.

"[I'm] at the house, resting," Cotto posted. The Puerto Rican, who will stake his WBO welterweight crown against Pacquiao, was watching an HBO primer on the fight Saturday, saying "Today's 24/7 was really good." ***(PDI)***

GCA

From Page 28

last-ranked Stingrays, who were winless in 14 matches.

The Eagles are gunning for an unprecedented six straight championship after gaining their fifth title last season, following a victory over Mt. Carmel, 25-11, 25-10.

The MCS Knights finished the regular season at the bottom half of the team standings with their 5-8 record and will challenge the third-ranked SIS-Blue in today's game. SIS-B had a 10-3 slate in the regular season. The MCS and SIS-B match is set for 3:30pm.

The other quarterfinal pairing today will have sister teams Marianas Baptist Academy A and B squaring off at 4:30pm. MBA-A was runner-up to GCA in the regular season after the former recorded an 11-2 mark. MBA-B was ranked seventh with its 5-9 record.

The winners of today's quarterfinal matches will duel for the second semis ticket on Thursday and will face the victor of the GCA-Calvary tiff in the championship game on Friday.

TEBUTEB

From Page 28

tallied a net 37 after the first nine holes to prevail in the tiebreak over Dwayne Stephens and Tony Rogolifoi, who recorded a 38 and 38.5 on the front nines, respectively.

Stephens had a consistent game at the Agingan Point course with his 45s on both nines for a gross 90, while the 13-handicapper Rogolifoi drilled a 45 on the front and improved a bit on the back with a 44 for a gross 89.

Jesse Seman and RGA tournament director Jess Wabol failed to finish in the Top 3, but won the closest to the pin contest on holes No. 3 and 14, respectively.

Seman had a net 78 for the fourth best of the day, while Jess Wabol posted a net 80. Other RGA members who joined last weekend's tournament were Ulyssis Kapileo (net 78), Rey Villagomez (79), Joe Saures (80), Sonny Flores (86), Ben Duenas (79), and Tars Olopai (81).

Next up for RGA is the December Ace tournament set for Nov. 21 at COP. The winner of that tournament will complete the RGA Club Championship cast.

The club championship is scheduled for Dec. 6 at the Marianas Country Club and will have Duenas, Seman, Ray Tigilau, Asterio Tawanpiy, Olopai, Cui Xian Lai, Saures, Flores, Nick Sablan, and Tebuteb as the first 11 qualifiers. Jess Wabol is reminding qualifiers to meet the required number of tournaments to officially make it to the year-end event.

Monthly Ace winners must compete in at least six RGA tournaments. Failing to do so will have Ace runners-up filling up the monthly winners slot.

For more information about RGA's remaining tournaments, contact club president Jordon Kosam at 483-4506 or Jess Wabol at 288-1129.

CELTICS

From Page 28

second place with a 6-1 mark, followed by the Sonics (6-2), 670 Rollers II (5-2), Sparks (4-2), Runnin' Rebels (4-4), Chalan Kanoa Saints (4-4), Rollers I (3-3), Ol'Aces (2-4), Young 670 Rollers (2-6), Celtics (1-7), and Hi-5 (0-8).

Celtics 50 – T. Taguchi 31, Sablan 11, Nicholas 4, Kautz 2, K. Taguchi 2.

Hi-5 40 – Caro 16, Reyes 10, Tudela 6, Hemlani 3, Atalig 2, G. Macahito 2, F. Macahito 1.

Scoring by halves: 33-22, 50-40.

THREE-WAY

From Page 28

and bounced back from an opening-set loss to beat Just Do it, 17-21, 21-9, 15-7, and made it to the company of Pwipwise and Random Radicals.

Make It Bali and Manta Diver opened the hostilities last Thursday with the former recording a sweep, 21-13, 21-11, 15-8, to nail its third win in seven games.

The last match of the night had Git It stunning O-No, 22-20, 21-17, 13-15.

This year's fall league is more than halfway of its regular season and if the tie is to be broken at this time, Pwipwise would have won the tiebreak, as it has earned 16 sets won. Random Radicals and Chenutt Crew has earned 12 set won apiece.

Although a team needs to win only two sets, the league still plays three sets every game to break ties at the conclusion of the regular season. Each squad will play 11 games in the regular season and only the Top 8 will advance to the single-elimination playoffs.

With Pwipwise, Random Radicals, and Chenutt Crew occupying the Top 3 spots, nine teams will contest the remaining five slots.

Angamwas has an edge over the eight other teams, as it is in fourth place with a 5-2 record, followed by O-No (4-3), Shogunai (4-3), Make It Bali (3-4), Special Delivery (3-4), Fisingan (2-4), Git It (2-5), Just Do It (1-6), and Manta Diver (0-7).

O-No and Shogunai have gained 11 sets won each thus are tied for fifth to sixth place. Make It Bali is ranked ahead of Special Delivery at No. 7, as it has nine sets won against the latter's six.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	7	1	.875	—
Philadelphia	3	3	.500	3
Toronto	3	3	.500	3
New York	1	6	.143	5 1/2
New Jersey	0	7	.000	6 1/2

Southeast Division

Miami	5	1	.833	—
Atlanta	5	2	.714	1/2
Orlando	5	2	.714	1/2
Charlotte	3	3	.500	2
Washington	2	5	.286	3 1/2

Central Division

Chicago	4	2	.667	—
Milwaukee	3	2	.600	1/2
Cleveland	4	3	.571	1/2
Detroit	3	4	.429	1 1/2
Indiana	2	3	.400	1 1/2

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

Dallas	4	2	.667	—
Houston	4	2	.667	—
San Antonio	2	3	.400	1 1/2
New Orleans	2	5	.286	2 1/2
Memphis	1	6	.143	3 1/2

Northwest Division

Denver	5	2	.714	—
Portland	4	3	.571	1
Oklahoma City	3	3	.500	1 1/2
Utah	2	4	.333	2 1/2
Minnesota	1	6	.143	4

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	6	1	.857	—
Phoenix	6	1	.857	—
L.A. Clippers	3	4	.429	3
Sacramento	3	4	.429	3
Golden State	1	4	.200	4

Yesterday's Games

Phoenix 102, Washington 90
Detroit 88, Philadelphia 81
Oklahoma City 102, Orlando 74
Sacramento 120, Golden State 107
Portland 116, Minnesota 93
L.A. Lakers 104, New Orleans 88

NBA LEADERS

SCORING

	G	FG	FT	PTS	AVG
Bryant, LAL	7	86	60	235	33.6
Anthony, DEN	7	70	72	220	31.4
Martin, SAC	5	47	42	153	30.6
Bosh, TOR	6	51	64	171	28.5
Wade, MIA	6	54	56	168	28.0
Nowitzki, DAL	6	52	49	160	26.7
Paul, NOR	7	65	43	186	26.6
James, CLE	7	62	48	184	26.3
Durant, OKC	6	53	38	149	24.8
Arenas, WAS	7	56	46	171	24.4
Williams, UTA	6	54	28	145	24.2
Gordon, DET	7	53	50	168	24.0
Kaman, LAC	7	65	31	161	23.0
Granger, IND	5	36	27	114	22.8
Gay, MEM	7	60	29	156	22.3
Roy, POR	7	46	51	153	21.9
Johnson, ATL	7	57	27	149	21.3
Bargnani, TOR	6	44	20	124	20.7
Randolph, MEM	7	57	28	142	20.3
Ariza, HOU	6	42	20	121	20.2

FG PERCENTAGE

	FG	FGA	PCT
Blair, SAN	19	29	.655
Howard, ORL	45	69	.652
Dampier, DAL	22	34	.647
Speights, PHL	32	50	.640
Hayes, HOU	23	37	.622
Perkins, BOS	31	50	.620
Paul, NOR	65	105	.619
Noah, CHI	28	46	.609
O'Neal, MIA	37	61	.607
Hilario, DEN	32	53	.604

REBOUNDS

	G	OFF	DEF	TOT	AVG
Wallace, CHA	6	17	66	83	13.8
Gasol, MEM	7	25	58	83	11.9
Bosh, TOR	6	21	50	71	11.8
Duncan, SAN	5	14	45	59	11.8
Boozer, UTA	6	15	52	67	11.2
Okafor, NOR	7	24	54	78	11.1
Howard, ORL	7	25	53	78	11.1
Noah, CHI	6	23	43	66	11.0
Haywood, WAS	7	30	45	75	10.7
Randolph, MEM	7	35	40	75	10.7

ASSISTS

	G	AST	AVG
Nash, PHX	7	83	11.9
Williams, UTA	6	59	9.8
Paul, NOR	7	68	9.7
Rondo, BOS	8	72	9.0
Kidd, DAL	6	49	8.2
Westbrook, OKC	6	49	8.2
James, CLE	7	56	8.0
Brooks, HOU	6	46	7.7
B. Davis, LAC	7	50	7.1
Duhon, NYK	7	46	6.6

NFL STANDINGS

AMERICAN CONFERENCE

East

	W	L	T	Pct	PF	PA
New England	6	2	0	.750	225	115
N.Y. Jets	4	4	0	.500	177	134
Miami	3	5	0	.375	193	204
Buffalo	3	5	0	.375	123	169

South

Indianapolis	8	0	0	1.000	217	108
Houston	5	4	0	.556	215	188
Jacksonville	4	4	0	.500	157	198
Tennessee	2	6	0	.250	148	238

North

Cincinnati	6	2	0	.750	180	135
Pittsburgh	5	2	0	.714	167	129
Baltimore	4	4	0	.500	206	154
Cleveland	1	7	0	.125	78	209

West

Denver	6	1	0	.857	140	96
San Diego	5	3	0	.625	206	179
Oakland	2	6	0	.250	78	201
Kansas City	1	7	0	.125	126	205

NATIONAL CONFERENCE

East

Dallas	6	2	0	.750	217	152
Philadelphia	5	3	0	.625	219	153
N.Y. Giants	5	4	0	.556	232	204
Washington	2	6	0	.250	113	154

South

New Orleans	8	0	0	1.000	303	174
Atlanta	5	3	0	.625	202	166
Carolina	3	5	0	.375	148	196
Tampa Bay	1	7	0	.125	134	231

North

Minnesota	7	1	0	.875	244	174
Green Bay	4	4	0	.500	215	172
Chicago	4	4	0	.500	180	191
Detroit	1	7	0	.125	133	237

West

Arizona	5	3	0	.625	198	164
San Francisco	3	5	0	.375	174	174
Seattle	3	5	0	.375	167	167
St. Louis	1	7	0	.125	77	221

Yesterday's Games

Arizona 41, Chicago 21
Atlanta 31, Washington 17
New England 27, Miami 17
Indianapolis 20, Houston 17
Cincinnati 17, Baltimore 7
Tampa Bay 38, Green Bay 28
Jacksonville 24, Kansas City 21
Seattle 32, Detroit 20
New Orleans 30, Carolina 20
San Diego 21, N.Y. Giants 20
Tennessee 34, San Francisco 27
Dallas 20, Philadelphia 16

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

LOCAL SCORES

ROTARY STANDINGS

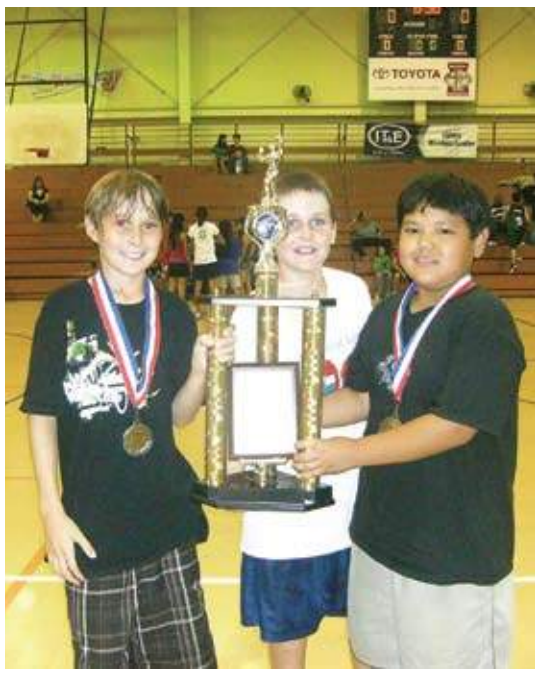
G-Stars	6	0
Sixers	6	1
Sonics	6	2
670 Rollers II	5	2
Sparks	4	2
Runnin' Rebels	4	4
CK Saints	4	4
Rollers I	3	3
Ol'Aces	2	4
Young 670 Rollers 3	2	6
Celtics	1	7
Hi-5 0	8	

NMIVA STANDINGS

	W	L	Sets Won
Pwipwise	6	1	16
Random Radicals	6	1	12
Chewnutt Crew	6	1	12
Angamwas	5	2	11
O-No	4	3	11
Shogunai	4	3	11
Make It Bali	3	4	9
Special Delivery	3	4	6
Fisingan	2	4	6
Git It	2	5	5
Just Do It	1	6	3
Manta Diver	0	7	1

Coalition of Private Schools on Saipan Volleyball League

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO



Saipan International School students hoist the Sportsmanship Award trophy.

The GCA Eagles and their supporters pose for a group photo after beating Mt. Carmel School in the junior high school division of the Coalition of Private Schools on Saipan Volleyball League on Friday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Whispering Palms players pose with their third place trophy.

Runners-up MCS Knights receive their trophy.

MBA players huddle during a break in their playoff game against Calvary.

MVP Clay McCullough-Stearns, right, leads the top individual performers of the league.

GCA's Chris Cajigan stretches to return a shot to Mt. Carmel School during their title game.

Whispering Palms' Jake Lee hits and misses during their semis game against GCA.

A Calvary Christian Academy player waits for the ball down low during their playoff match against Marianas Baptist Academy.

Marianas Baptist Academy's Won Woo Choi serves during their playoff game against Calvary Christian Academy.

Romo, Cowboys topple Eagles, 20-16

Miles Austin punctuated his touchdown catch by emphatically firing the ball into the stands.

24

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Suns slow to shine in daytime, beat Wizards, 102-90

Jason Richardson scored 22 points and Steve Nash had 17 assists as the Phoenix Suns maintained their dominance of the Washington Wizards with a 102-90 victory Sunday.

25

GCA, Calvary draw first blood

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Defending champion Grace Christian Academy and Calvary Christian Academy marched into the semifinal round after notching separate wins at the start of the playoffs in the high school division of the 2009-2010 Coalition of Private Schools on Saipan Volleyball League yesterday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

The CCA Sharks played in the first game and needed three sets to slip past Saipan International School-Green and booked the first semis seat. Calvary won the closely fought opening set, 23-25, but failed to wrap up the match early when SIS-Green nailed a 25-16 triumph in the second set. Finally, the Sharks secured the win with a 15-10 victory in the deciding third set.

Calvary will face GCA in the semifinals on Thursday.

The Eagles boosted their title-defense bid, following an easy 25-10, 25-14 win over Northern Marianas Academy.

It took the defending champions less than an hour to notch the second semis berth, as they clearly outplayed the inexperienced NMA Stingrays.

Brandon Chargualaf and Luther Taylor's booming spikes were too much for NMA, which managed to have a better showing in the second set, as the Eagles' duo and other starters sat out in the second set.

With the Eagles having an easy cruise in the first round of the playoffs, the defending champions had the luxury of resting Dae Min Jeon, who along with Chargualaf and Taylor formed GCA's potent offensive trio.

GCA finished this year's regular season on top with a 12-2 record, pairing them against the

See GCA on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Grace Christian Academy's Luther Taylor leaps for one of the booming spikes he connected against Northern Marianas Academy during their playoff game in the 2009-2010 Coalition of Private Schools on Saipan Volleyball League yesterday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Celtics gain elusive first win in Rotary caging

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The Celtics are winless no more, following their 50-40 triumph over Hi-5 in the 2009 Saipan Rotary Club Youth Basketball League on Friday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Coming into the weekend's game, Lady Luck had yet to smile for both the Celtics and Hi-5, which dropped their first seven games this season. However, the Celtics managed to end the slide behind the hot offensive game of Tim Taguchi, while Hi-5 fell short anew of making it to the win column.

Hi-5 had its best chance to move out of slump on Thursday when it led Young 670 Rollers in the last two minutes of the game. However, Hi-5 lost its grip on the lead and eventually the game after committing a couple of errors in the remaining one minute of the second half.

Against the Celtics, Hi-5 had a so-so performance and never gained control of the game, as it failed to neutralize Taguchi.

Taguchi scored a season-high 31 points to give the Celtics their first win in the 18-and-under caging. Sean Sablan also finished in double figures, drilling 11 markers.

Despite the victory, the Celtics' chances for the playoffs are not that high, as they are still at the bottom half of the team standings at No. 11. Only the Top 8 teams will make it to the next round.

Hi-5 is the first team to be eliminated in the youth caging, as it dropped to a dismal 0-8 slate. Ezra Caro continued to play true to his role as Hi-5's top gunner after he led the team's winning cause, tallying 16 markers against the Celtics.

After the Celtics-Hi-5 tiff, the Rotary caging took a break for two days and resumed action last night with Rollers I taking on the undefeated G-Stars.

The G-Stars lead the 12-team league with their immaculate 6-0 record. The Sixers are in

See CELTICS on Page 26

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

The Celtics' Tim Taguchi, seen here going for a shot against two Sparks defenders, scored 31 points in their 50-40 triumph over Hi-5 in the Rotary caging on Friday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Three-way tie for lead in NMIVA league

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Three teams are in a deadlock for the lead in the 2009 PIC/Miller/Gatorade/Monster-NMIFA 4-Person Co-Ed Beach Volleyball Fall League after last week's games on the PIC sand court.

Locked in a three-way logjam are Pwipwise, Random Radicals, and Chenutt Crew, which improved to identical 6-1 records after posting separate wins last Tuesday and Thursday.

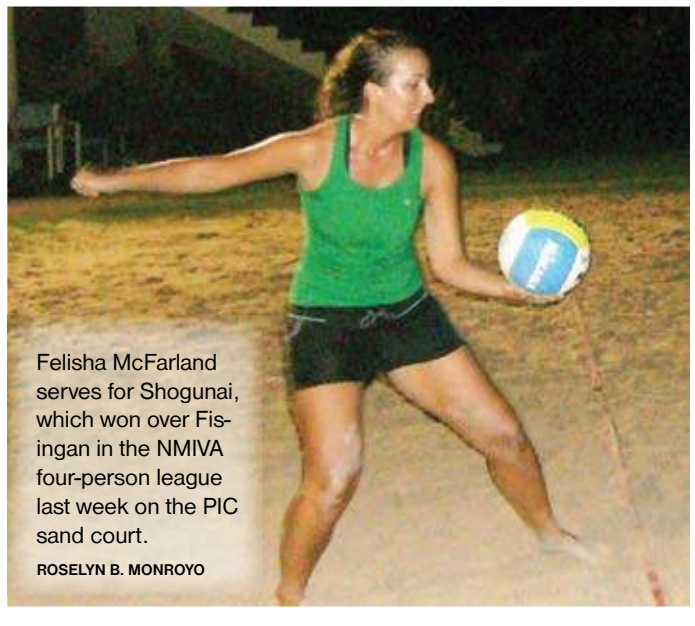
Pwipwise played in the first game last Tuesday and won the first two sets of its match against Angamwas, 21-13, 23-21, to secure the victory early. Angamwas, which dropped from a tie for first place to second, foiled a Pwipwise sweep via a 15-6 triumph in the third set.

Random Radicals joined Pwipwise on top of the leaderboard, following a sweep of Special Delivery in the second game last Tuesday, 21-11, 21-16, 15-9.

In the third match, Shogunai dominated Fisingan, 22-20, 21-18, 15-12.

Chenutt Crew was featured in the second game last Thursday

See THREE-WAY on Page 26



Felisha McFarland serves for Shogunai, which won over Fisingan in the NMIVA four-person league last week on the PIC sand court.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Tebuteb takes Nov. Ace, Wabol tops Dec. qualifier

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Tom Tebuteb's qualifying score went unbeaten last week, earning him the Refaluwasch Golf Association November Ace title and a slot to the club championship next month.

Tebuteb shot a net 68 in last month's November Ace qualifier held simultaneously with the RGA Memorial Classic at the Kingfisher Golf Links. Twelve RGA members then trooped to Coral Ocean Point on Sunday, hoping to score better than net 68, but none succeeded.

The player who came closest to beat the qualifier score was Joe Wabol, who carded a net 71, built on identical front and back scores of 47. Wabol is a 23-handicapper and fired a gross 94.

With his net best 71, Wabol holds the score to beat for the December Ace. Sunday's tournament also doubled as RGA's December Ace qualifier.

Tebuteb tried to beat his own score in the weekend tournament, but faltered, as he only netted a 76, tying two others.

The 22-handicapper had a 48 on the front and 50 on the back for a gross 98. Tebuteb

See TEBUTEB on Page 26